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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

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Press Service Refuses To Confirm U.S. Summit Site

OW1902173393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] With reference to a diplomat who preferred to remain anonymous, the Danish newspaper BERLINSKE TIDENDE announced on Friday [19 February] that Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton will meet in Copenhagen on June 21 and 22.

The Russian president's press service informed INTERFAX that among the cities which different sources think are likely to host the event, there is Copenhagen. However, the venue of the talks is still a subject of discussion between the two states' foreign departments. In view of this, all of these speculations can be neither confirmed nor denied.

U.S. Signs Agreement on Uranium From Nuclear Weapons

LD1902132393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1323 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Vanichkin]

[Text] Washington February 19 TASS—A Russian-U.S. intergovernmental agreement on the use of highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons was signed here on Thursday. This is Russia's first agreement concluded with the new U.S. Administration.

The agreement envisages the processing of highly enriched uranium, extracted from nuclear weapons that are subject to cutback, at domestic enterprises into a low-enriched one for subsequent application as fuel in nuclear reactors under contracts of the U.S. Department of Energy and private firms, Viktor Mikhailov, Russian minister for nuclear energy, who signed the document, told ITAR- TASS.

In the coming five years, 50 metric tonnes of weapon-grade uranium are to be processed to the tune of about one billion U.S. dollars, Mikhailov said.

To implement the agreement one will have to choose a form of cooperation between Russian and U.S. businesses which will result in a maximum economic return, including an increase in the quota of the export of Russian uranium to the world market.

With a view to implementing the agreement, Russia and the U.S. intend to conclude contracts to specify the trade and economic aspects of the agreement, the organisational-legal forms of cooperation, measures to meet non-proliferation requirements, physical protection, stock taking of nuclear materials and control over them, and environmental protection.

From strategic point of view, the agreement will make it possible to ensure an inflow of hard currency to Russia, and reach out to the world market of uranium, the minister pointed out.

Russian enterprises will be able to provide workload for enterprises processing highly enriched uranium into nuclear-power- station fuel. And finally, close cooperation with U.S. producers on the market of uranium products will be established, Mikhailov said.

Kozyrev on Yeltsin-Clinton Summit, EC Accord, Middle East

OW2102171793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1657 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Andrey Kozyrev called unsubstantiated reports that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton on June 21-22 in Copenhagen, where, at the same time, the European Community Council will be meeting. He said Russia is conducting an "independent" policy toward Europe and the United States and is trying not to "lean" to one side or the other.

The minister reported that Moscow is now developing an "accord on full-scale partnership" with the European Community, and he did not rule out the possibility that high level negotiations with the EC would be necessary. However, a Yeltsin-Clinton summit would not be connected with this. It would be different, he said, if the Russian and American presidents wanted to meet in the framework of the CSCE process.

Regarding the negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher which are scheduled for February 25, Kozyrev said that he plans to advance "several new ideas" on how to bring the Middle East settlement process "out of gridlock."

Kozyrev Comments on Yugoslavia, U.S. Summit

LD2102171093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1617 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 21 February—"If by tightening sanctions against the former Yugoslavia, you mean tightening control over their fulfillment, then we consider this necessary. Russia favors both the strict observation of such sanctions and also a strict embargo on supplying arms and ammunition to the conflicting sides in Bosnia," Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated today in a telephone interview with ITAR-TASS and INTERFAX corespondents. The sanctions and the embargo are "the law" adopted by the world community and must be observed by all sides, the minister stressed.

Today this law is being broken, he continued, particularly by the Muslim and Croat sides. This was recently recognized by Bosnia- Hercegovina President Izetbegovic. Russia raised the question of an embargo on arms supplies and will insist on its absolute fulfillment.

We favor a peaceful settlement, Andrey Kozyrev stated. The Russian Supreme Soviet recently adopted an appeal to the parliaments of the republics formed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Stating the need for "a clear signal" to all parties of the conflict, the appeal says that Russia, in common with the international community, will support any movement toward settling the conflict by political means. If any of the sides seeks to resolve the problem by force, then, the minister stressed, it should be prepared for sanctions against it, as happened earlier with regard to Belgrade.

The minister said that the Russian foreign policy department is considering all kinds of ways of rendering humanitarian aid to civilians of the former Yugoslavia. "One can say that after hesitating for a long time and after listening to our advice, the Bosnian Serbs have decided to send their representative for talks in New York. This is yet another signal proving that there is a shift in the right direction in the position taken by Belgrade and the Serbs, namely toward a peaceful settlement. It is also extremely important that this signal be accepted by other parties in the conflict too, Andrey Kozyrev said.

The minister called a Danish newspaper report that a Russian-U.S. summit will be held in Copenhagen in June a "trial balloon." "It is news to me," he said. The minister reported that at the meeting in Geneva with the U.S. secretary of state in the next few days, the Russian side intends to exchange opinions on the issue of how "to give impetus" to the process of a Near East settlement. "We have a number of ideas on this," he added.

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1657 GMT on 21 February adds:

["Andrey Kozyrev called unsubstantiated reports that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton on June 21-22 in Copenhagen, where, at the same time, the European Community Council will be meeting. He said Russia is conducting an 'independent' policy toward Europe and the United States and is trying not to 'lean' to one side or the other.

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["Regarding the negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher which are scheduled for February 25, Kozyrev said that he plans to advance 'several new ideas' on how to bring the Middle East settlement process 'out of gridlock.']

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1658 GMT on 21 February carries the following:

["Discussing the celebration of February 23 as Defenders of the Fatherland Day, Kozyrev said he would like the day to become a national holiday and hoped it would be able to 'return the prestige' to Russia's armed forces. He said that for the first time in a decade they now have the opportunity to protect the real national interests of the state. The mission of the armed forces, Kozyrev said, should not be 'the imaginary confrontation with American imperialism,' but rather the protection of Russian borders and the fight against extremism and aggressive nationalism. The armed forces should be 'dedicated to the people and the president,' he said.

["Kozyrev believes that the demonstration which representatives of the opposition have scheduled for February 23 could turn into 'a demonstration of the departing ghosts of communism.' He said he feared that some military personnel, who have decided to participate in the demonstration, could be 'drawn into internal political games with obviously bad aims.'"]

Kozyrev Supports UN Sanctions Against Yugoslavia

OW2102171193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1657 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told Interfax and ITAR-TASS by telephone on Sunday [21 February] that the sanctions already imposed on former Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) should be strictly implemented and that the embargo on arms supplies to Bosnia and Hercegovina, and to the entire territory of former Yugoslavia, should be observed, too.

"The law - the UN Security Council's resolutions have the status of international laws - must apply to all," he added. He also pointed out that all of the conflicting parties in Bosnia bear the responsibility for the ongoing bloodshed. The more steps former Yugoslavia makes towards peaceful settlement, the more real will the possibility of a gradual lifting of sanctions against Belgrade be, he went on to say. Such steps are being made already, Kozyrev admitted. He also welcomed reports about the Bosnian Serbians' plans to send representatives to New York for talks on the Owen- Vance plan. "It is important that the other parties concerned read this signal correctly," he said.

He pointed out that if Croatia continues offensive operations, it should be ready for even tougher sanctions. Commenting on the problem of Bosnian Muslims, Kozyrev said they should be given to understand that no international intervention threatens Bosnia. In his opinion, neither the presumption of guilt nor the presumption of innocence can be applied to the conflicting parties when war crimes are discussed.

On February 17, the Russian parliament adopted a resolution on the former Yugoslavia, stipulating that by March 1 the Russian government inform parliament how it is implementing parliament's decision on the resumption of humanitarian aid supplies to former Yugoslavia. Commenting on this resolution, Kozyrev said that if Russia intends to join the club of civilized states, it must strictly observe international law. He also said that for several months now Moscow has been raising the question of humanitarian aid to Yugoslavia, including oil and gas for civil needs, in the corresponding UN Security Council committee. So far, this idea has not received a positive response, said Kozyrev.

"We will not make unilateral moves, however, because they would go against the law," he added. If Russia made unilateral moves, he continued, its example might be followed by individual Islamic countries which have been willing to interfere in the Yugoslav conflict and support the Muslims for a long time. As a result, Sarajevo might become the epicenter of a global catastrophe that would seriously affect the Russian Federation, said the Russian foreign minister. In light of this, he expressed hope that most of the Russian deputies would finally understand this truth.

According to reliable sources, some high-ranking members of the Russian parliament believe that the parliament's resolution should be implemented without delay.

Moscow Wants Actions in Black Sea, Danube Coordinated

LD2202084393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0813 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Moscow February 22 (TASS)—All actions with the participation of naval ships of member states of the Western European Union (WEU) in the Black Sea and the Danube basin adjacent to it, staged within the framework of control over the observance of sanctions against Yugoslavia, should be first coordinated with Russia, says a statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry circulated here. It deals with some publications in mass media about a possibility of the use of a fleet flying the WEU flag in the Danube mouth. The statement stressed that the Russian side has no doubts over the need for strictly observing the resolutions of the U.N. Security Council. However, Russia as a Black Sea power has its own interests in the region and is signatory to corresponding agreements dealing with the navigation regime there.

PRAVDA Interviews Serbian President Milosevic

PM2202113193 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 93 p 3

[Interview with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic conducted by special correspondents Gennadiy Seleznev and Yevgeniy Fadeyev in Belgrade; date not given: "Slobodan Milosevic: Yugoslavia Is the First Casualty of German Revanchism"]

[Text] [PRAVDA] Mr. President, what is the crux of the present moment?

[Milosevic] What is happening in our country today reveals best of all who is who. Some people want the Yugoslav crisis to end peacefully, others want the war to continue. I would remind you that the Croatian forces' attack on the territory of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, which comes under the protection of the UN peacemaking forces, took place at the very moment when the participants in the talks in Geneva were just about to sign an agreement.

At the same time Muslim formations are launching an offensive in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Izetbegovic's whole line of conduct has but one aim—to provoke international intervention...

The Serbs cannot resolve the question of war and peace on their own. The Serbian side has ceased fire in Bosnia several times, but the other side has continued its military operations on different scales. Whether the Muslims end the war will depend on the forces which are actively helping them

As for Serbia's position... We have never altered it: We have always advocated a peaceful solution of the issue. We have not contested and do not contest any people's right to self-determination. This means that the Serbian people also enjoy a similar right. You remember what happened. Slovenia and Croatia unilaterally seceded from Yugoslavia, seceded by use of force. Those steps were immediately supported by those who had a vital interest in this.

We faced the surprising fact of the international community giving more weight to the right of secession than the right to remain in the country. A major crime was thus committed: Yugoslavia, a country which was one of the founders of the United Nation, was destroyed. I will tell you bluntly: It is German policy which lies behind all these events. It is in the German-Catholic alliance's interest to destroy not just our country, but yours too. It is in their interests that our and your blood be shed.

[PRAVDA] It all began...

[Milosevic] It all began with the unification of Germany. As soon as that happened, German began punishing the victors in World War II. The press, with German pedantry, divided the world up into good and bad. The "good" are those who sided with the fascists during World War II and lost the war. While the "bad" are those who did not side with them and won the war... Yugoslavia had to be destroyed. Yugoslavia was the first casualty of the policy of revanchism.

What happened in Croatia? A totalitarian chauvinist regime has been established there. It started when the the election-winning Croatian Democratic Union [HDZ] party started rapidly arming itself. That was the first instance of such action since World War II; the HDZ receives Germany's support. Without such "signs of attention" Croatia could not today have ventured to attack territory under UN protection. I was asked in Geneva: "What was the reason for Zagreb attacking Krajina?" I answered: "Ask the Germans, they know for sure."

Weeks were needed for the UN Security Council to define its position regarding Croatian aggression. If Serbia had carried out such aggression, the problem would have been resolved in a couple of hours. And international sanctions would have been immediately introduced. However, Croatia suffered only verbal condemnation. That is the "new world order." That is to say, double standards in politics. Two-faced politics.

[PRAVDA] What can you say about U.S. President Clinton's plan for former Yugoslavia?

[Milosevic] To be honest, it did not surprise me that the U.S. president should favor a peaceful solution of the problem. As a wise politician he has made a wise decision. Indeed, there is no way to resolve the Yugoslav crisis other than by negotiation. And no formula for a real peace exists other than by respecting the interests of the three peoples—Serbian, Croatian, and Muslim. If peace is established in the interests of just one people, that will be detrimental to the other two peoples... If you take what does not belong to you, you are digging your own son's grave. We want nothing from anyone. But we will not give up what is ours...

[PRAVDA] What do you now expect from Russia?

[Milosevic] Fairness and objectivity. It is not even a matter of our historical ties and centuries-long friendship. It is a matter of basic objectivity. We cannot expect in any circumstances that Russia participate in genocidal measures against the Serbian people. Not everyone in your country knows the true state of affairs here. If they knew, no one would agree to take part in sanctions against us. But, alas, that has happened: Serbia and Montenegro are under strict embargo. And we cannot understand why Russia takes part in such. I will tell you bluntly: This is ingominious for Russia!

...The sanctions against us are the price paid for the solidarity which we show Serbs outside Serbia. How can we abandon our own people without any assistance? It is humanitarian assistance. It is considered logical when the Germans help the Croats. Why, then, is it not logical when the Serbs help Serbs?

Yeltsin Sees New Military Doctrine Based on 'Friendly States'

OW2202115793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1113 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin has stated that the new democratic Russia deserves a quality new army. He told the "KRASNAYA ZVEZDA" newspaper in an interview in connection with the Defenders of the Fatherland Day on February 23 that "we do not consider any country or coalition of countries either in the West or in the East to be an enemy." "Our foreign policy is guided by the principle of creating a belt of friendly states as the premise for Russia's new military doctrine and ideology." The Russian president revealed that the Russian Federation rejected war and the application of force or the threat of the application of force as a means for achieving political, economic or any other aims. The application of force, he said, was justifiable only in the face of aggression. Yeltsin also considered that the threat of both nuclear and conventional war had considerably decreased. However the threat of local wars and conflicts on a regional scale had considerably increased, and that mainly for this reason Russia's armed forces must be prepared. The armed forces must be compact, highly professional and possess the latest equipment. They must be mobile and ready to act in defense of the Fatherland and its national interests.

Regarding the social concerns of servicemen the Russian president pointed out that, despite the current overall difficulties, more had been done and continued to be done than for other sections of society. The main results were higher pay for officers, special privileges for servicemen and their families stationed in regions where national conflicts were taking place. Yeltsin said that the provision of accommodation for servicemen remained the most acute problem. A draft program for the above was currently under discussion by the government. This would guarantee a two-fold increase in the construction of accommodation over a three-year period.

The president concluded by saying that the maintenance of peace and the non-proliferation of regional conflicts on Russian soil was the duty of all, but that the army was responsible for this more than ever.

State Utility Threatens To Halt Gas Supply to Ukraine

OW2002134093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1323 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's state concern Gazprom, running the country's natural gas industry, on Friday sent a telegram to the Ukrainian Government threatening to stop, as of February 25, gas supplies to Ukraine due to the latter's failure to pay for the gas it received in January.

The chairman of the Gazprom board, Rem Vyakhirev, said at a press conference on Saturday that Ukraine's failure to pay for January's deliveries has made it impossible to pay wages to the workers of gas-producing enterprises in the north of Russia. As of February 18, Ukraine owed Russia 165 billion rubles.

Russia has informed about its decision gas-distributing companies in 13 European countries, as well as organizations servicing the transit pipelines running through Ukrainian territory (93 percent of Russia's gas pipelines run through that republic's). Vyakhirev said Russia's gas supplies to other countries will not be reduced (earlier on, whenever Russia cut down its gas supplies to Ukraine, the latter took for itself part of the gas that was being exported).

He also said Russian and Ukrainian experts have, since the beginning of February, been discussing various aspects of the intergovernmental agreement on the volume of Russia's gas supplies to Ukraine. The first round of the talks ended in failure, he said, due to the position of Ukraine, which has still not decided on its purchase price. In Vyakhirev's opinion, Ukraine is deliberately trying to draw out the talks. In January, Russia demanded that Ukraine pay about 1,600 rubles for every 1,000 cubic meters of gas, but, as of February 1, changed the price to $85 per 1,000 cubic meters.

Ukraine Yet To Respond to Decision on Gas Supplies

LD2202103393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1020 GMT 22 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—Ukraine has not yet responded in any way to the Russian decision to stop gas supplies as from February 25 to make Ukraine pay its debt for already shipped fuel, according to acting director of the "Gasprom" concern Rem Vyakhirev.

Ukraine has not paid Russia for a single cubic metre of gas received this year and the debt amounts to 168 billion roubles, he told TASS on Monday, adding that Russian gas-producing enterprises are facing financial difficulties because of that.

"It cannot last any longer like that. We are not interested in extreme measures, but if the Ukrainian side fails to pay for the already received gas we shall cease supplies", he said.

Vyakhirev also blamed Ukrainian colleagues from the "Ukrgasprom" concern for "pumping out" Russian gas transported via Ukraine to Europe along 1,200-km long pipelines on the Ukrainian territory. He said several such cases were reported.

In this connection the Russian "Gasexport" foreign trade association had even to warn foreign customers that they may not receive the full amount of natural gas although "Gasexport" is doing everything possible to stand up to its commitments, according to Vyakhirev.

Russian-Ukrainian Talks 'A Record Failure'

PM1902142593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Feb 93 p 4

[Mikhail Berger article: "Deadlock at Russo-Ukrainian Talks May Finish Off Both Countries' Economies"]

[Text] The talks between Russian and Ukrainian government delegations on problems pertaining to prices of mutual deliveries, tariffs for the transit of Russian gas exports via Ukrainian territory, and the foreign debt, which ended recently in Moscow, can be considered a record failure.

The fact that the talks ended in profound deadlock can be seen just from the announcement circulated by the Russian Government Press Center, which was couched in unusually brusque tones. It described Ukraine's stance on matters of servicing the foreign debt as unconstructive and even "doubly unacceptable." This was not an official note, but the official provenance of this report—the government's press center—compels one to take a particularly attentive look at the situation that has taken shape.

The price of Russian gas delivered to Ukraine was the number one subject at the talks. It is well known that back in Yalta the presidents agreed in principle to switch to world prices in reciprocal trade. But when the time came to move on from agreements in principle to specific details, insuperable difficulties set in. It became clear at the government talks that the Ukrainian side is proposing to use world prices multiplied by a factor of 0.3 for all commodities. In other words, one tonne of oil should cost $36 rather than $120 as a result of using that factor.

Since dollars are tight and neither side can pay for the tremendous flow of commodities in hard currency, both sides are wiling to make payments in rubles. But there are varying ideas on the rate of exchange to be employed. Russia is proposing to use the going rate of exchange. That means the mean figure for the last quarter. The Ukrainian delegation is proposing to use a rational or sound rate of exchange. That must be interpreted as none other than a fixed rate, in other words a rate that artificially diverges from the market rate.

If you consider this scheme in principle, it looks mutually beneficial. IZVESTIYA was told by Sergey Dubinin, deputy chairman of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation with CIS Countries, that using the scheme proposed by Ukraine would mean Russia's subsidizing the Ukrainian economy. The point is, Dubinin said, that if commodity turnover between our countries was balanced, that is with equal traffic in both directions, there would be no questions. At the moment, however, the flow of goods from Russia considerably exceeds that in the opposite direction, and thus, if we employed the Ukrainian scenario for mutual settlements, we would effectively have to subsidize two-thirds of this surplus.

By our calculations, in monetary terms these subsidies would amount to roughly 1 trillion rubles [R] per year.

The gas question occupied a special position in the talks. In accordance with the Russian Government decision of 29 January this year, the price per 1,000 cubic meters for countries in the ruble zone can be no less than R13,000 (about R24,000 with value-added tax and duty). For countries outside the ruble zone the price per 1,000 cubic meters rises to R45,000.

The Russian side thinks that it is making concessions by offering Ukraine, which has in effect left the ruble zone, the most preferential of all possible terms. But Ukraine considers this price unacceptable and is trying to keep the charge close to the price in force until recently—R2,000-4,000 per 1,000 cubic meters.

Minister-Counselor Vladimir Fedorov, the Ukrainian trade representative, put forward the following argument:

"If Russia lets domestic consumers have gas at R4,000, why should we have to pay R24,000? That is unfair..."

Commenting on the overall situation with our economic mutual relations, Fedorov remarked that a dim-witted woman cooks a bad pot of porridge and rushes to smash the pots without stocking up with new ones. We are all like that: Having broken up the Union, we did not worry about a great deal in advance. Ukraine, Fedorov said, is willing to buy commodities from Russia at world prices, but not straightaway. Some kind of transitional period is needed. At the moment we have not reached mutual understanding, but we do have a major lever in the form of the transit tariff.

The charge for the transit of Russian gas being exported to Western Europe is indeed Ukraine's trump card. Application of world tariffs—about $2.2 per 1,000 cubic meters per 100 km—could severely reduce the profitability of Russia's most important export.

For its part Ukraine is offering to halve tariffs or even reduce them by two-thirds, but is in return asking the Russians to reduce the world price of gas by the same amount. The Russians think that this offer is disadvantageous since, in money terms, the transit tariff and gas deliveries are incomparable, and the reduction in the world price of gas is far in excess of the reduction in the transit tariff.

Vladimir Mashits, chairman of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation with CIS Countries, said that Russia is willing to make certain concessions, but expects similar steps to be taken by the other side. However, he said, Ukraine is not making any concessions on anything, and is at the same time taking umbrage in astonishment when it meets with a fitting response from Russia.

The knot of problems concerning the former USSR's foreign debt is tied just as tight. Ukraine has frequently said that it is unable to pay its share of the foreign debt in 1993. At the same time it is rejecting Russia's offer to take responsibility for Ukraine's share. Surrendering its debt commitments means giving up its share of the assets and property abroad.

"The Ukrainian economy cannot function normally without the foreign offices of steamship companies, the former Aeroflot, and other property of the former Union" Vladimir Fedorov said. "How can we give it up?"

In the Russian side's opinion, this stance by Ukraine is jeopardizing the talks on rescheduling the foreign debt, something in which neither Russia nor Ukraine are interested.

I could go on and on with this arithmetic of discord, but it is already obvious enough that it will be more and more difficult to find an answer to this difficult problem. Both sides do, however, admit that their economies cannot survive without the normalization of trade relations.

Russian Weapons for Sale at UAE Arms Fair

LD2102215593

[Editorial Report] Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian at 1900 GMT on 21 February broadcasts its regular "Itogi" news program, which contains a 6-minute video report by special correspondent Natalya Chernyshova from Abu Dhabi on the IDEX-93 arms fair. Chernyshova begins her report from Abu Dhabi, with video shots of numerous weapons on display or going through their paces. She says there are 350 companies from 54 countries at IDEX-93, the Middle East's largest arms bazaar, and Russia's stand scored many superlatives; "the biggest stand, with about 350 items on show; the best firepower; the best display of maneuverability on the range.

"On top of that, good news for domestic consumption: for the first time we have hit the market with the most up-to-date armaments. It turns out that not only is it competitive, but in many respects outperforms foreign equivalents," Chernyshova says.

There was so much to see, Chernyshova says, that she can dwell only on the systems that interested the experts most of all. "The TOR-M1 anti-aircraft system is designed for defense against surprise strikes. Its own radar searches at a range of up to 25 km and automatically tracks 48 targets. It is capable of switching from mobile mode to battle stations within five minutes and returning fire against two targets simultaneously.

"The Msta-S self-propelled artillery gun fires conventional rounds at a rate of 10 a minute, and also has Krasnopol guided rounds. It has a 98-percent target destruction rate. Moreover, the Krasnopol is 10 kilograms lighter, with a range of 5 kms longer than foreign equivalents.

"The Smerch multiple rocket system is the granddaughter of the Katyusha; it can deliver a 12-rocket strike over a range from 20 to 70 kms.

"The S-300-PM-U1 rocket system is designed to hit modern aircraft and missiles at a range of up to 150 km, six targets at a time.

"The showstopper, of course, was the T-80-U tank. Low profile and the lightest tank around at 46 tonnes, it can destroy armored and well-defended targets. Its rate of fire is seven to nine rounds a minute; maximum speed is 70km per hour. It has a three-man crew instead of four," Chernyshova states.

The United Arab Emirates signed a huge order for French Leclerc tanks at the show, says Chernyshova, despite the fact that some experts rated the Russians' tanks higher. The probable reason is that the arms market is dominated by the United States, the UK, and France, she says, "but it is said that there were talks about buying our tanks two years ago, and we shied away from selling such secret equipment".

Russia has cut arms sales by three-quarters since the inception of perestroyka, according to Chernyshova, and there are those who don't want to see it return to the marketplace. Some of Russia's aircraft, including the Mi-26 helicopter, received clearance to fly to IDEX only at the last minute: "It was only able to land in Abu Dhabi two days before the end of the exhibition," she adds.

Arms exports are a lucrative business, as Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev tells Chernyshova: "First, we are selling equipment to countries that are not potential enemies and do not pose any threat to our country. Second, we can earn a vast amount of money by selling this equipment, as long as we use that money wisely, of course," Grachev says.

Asked how much, Grachev answers: "I came here expecting to earn $4-5 billion. But on preliminary figures we are hoping for about $10-11 billion."

Arms fairs are only part of the process of buying weapons, Chernyshova concludes. The real talking goes on elsewhere and is highly secret, so foreign press reports that nobody bought any Russian hardware at IDEX could well be premature. In fact, there have been reports that negotiations are already under way.

Grachev Notes 'Defensive Character' of Russian Arms

OW2002182093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The International Defense Exhibition "IDEX-93" in Abu Dhabi has become the first exhibition at which Russia has demonstrated the potential of its defense complex. In his interview with Interfax the Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who heads the Russian delegation in the capital of the United Arabs Emirates, pointed out that the exhibition has not only economic but political significance for Russia as the largest world producers of arms and military equipment participated in this exhibition. Grachev expressed his conviction that the armaments presented by Russia at the exhibition "have clearly demonstrated the defensive character of the Russian military doctrine."

According to Grachev, the meetings and conversations conducted by him in the framework of the exhibition with the leaders of the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, and several other countries of this region and with the leaders of their military departments will assist in the development of military and military-technical cooperation the aim of which is to strengthen security and stability in the region. The Russian Defense Minister called deliveries of the Russian military equipment and arms, training of national military personnel by the Russian military experts, and creation of reliable air defense systems with Russia's assistance as the most prospective directions of this cooperation.

Russian Weapons Generate Interest, Few Contracts

PM2202121593 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Feb 93 p 3

[ITAR-TASS correspondent Viktor Lebedev report: "Idex-93: Great Interest, But Few Contracts So Far"]

[Text] Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation defense minister, and Mikhail Kalashnikov, designer of the world's best-known small-arms weapon—the AK-47 assault rifle—were the most popular participants in the Idex-93 international arms fair, held in the UAE.

The journalists from dozens of countries assembled in Abu Dhabi to cover the Near East's biggest trade fair in arms for ground and naval forces were unable to keep track of the Russian minister's itinerary. After taking part in the opening ceremony of the Russian pavilion and the displays of more than three dozen countries on 14 February, Pavel Grachev visited Kuwait and Bahrain at the invitation of those countries' governments on 15 and 16 February and held talks with his counterparts there. Some Arab news agencies and newspapers, having lost sight of the Russian minister, reported on 17 February that he was in the Sultanate of Oman, whereas he was carrying out a fact-finding trip around the Persian Gulf in the UAE's territorial waters at the time. After his sea trip he headed out into the desert, where night-firing exercises using Russian weapons were taking place, includinmg the "Tochka-U" tactical missiles, the "Smerch" salvo-fire system, the T-80 tank, and other types of weapons.

At a meeting with journalists and visitors to the fair the talented inventor Mikhail Kalashnikov described how the world's most popular assault rifle was created and about the work carried out to improve it. He demonstrated the latest model—the AK-74—gave interviews to representatives of newspapers and television companies, signed autographs, and had souvenir photographs taken.

Saudi companies have shown serious interest in the more sophisticated equipment. They have been attracted by a device produced by the optical instruments plant at Sergiyev Posad for detecting and tracking sources of laser emission. That plant's stand is generating, in the words of members of the Russian delegation, not just commercial but technical interest too. That is perfectly natural. The device, like more than half the exhibits, is being demonstrated for the first time.

The first three days of the fair saw the signing of three contracts. No fresh information on new deals has come in. One representative of the Russian delegation, in conversation with your ITAR-TASS correspondent, expressed confidence that the interest in Russian military equipment shown at Idex-93 would be realized in contracts and commercial accords, given the need, financial scope, and political will of potential buyers.

Article Sees Impending Rapprochement With Baghdad

MK2002122293 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Feb 93 p 4

[Article by Cairo correspondent Aleksandr Shumilin: "Baghdad Nights of the Russian Foreign Ministry. What Did I. Melikhov Do in Iraq Last Week?"]

[Text] Of course, the answer to that question is known only to such a limited group of people that analysts, and the leaders of the anti-Iraq coalition states, including the Arab countries, can only hazard a guess. Indeed, who would ever seriously trust the comments by the Russian Foreign Ministry that our country has in no way altered its approach to the Iraq-Kuwait problem? Naturally, very few competent people would, because the visit in itself is very eloquent and could well be seen as a long-awaited gift for the aggressor.

In substantiation of my judgment, I shall quote from an editorial in the Lebanese AL-SAFIR, which, incidentally, was reprinted by newspapers in many other Arab states. "Although Moscow persistently keeps repeating that Russia is not changing its line with regard to the sanctions against Iraq, and that it calls on Baghdad to comply with the UN resolutions, what is happening in reality testifies to the opposite: By sending I. Melikhov to Baghdad, Moscow is showing the first signs of change in its policy in this part of the world."

The fact that Russia, with its notorious "special interests" in Iraq, is the weakest link in the anti-Husayn coalition was obvious from the very outset. Still alive is the memory of a visit to Baghdad by a high-ranking emissary from Moscow at the height of the Desert Storm operation exactly two years ago. That move aroused bewilderment in the world, to put it mildly, but it had the appearance of an attempt by big brother to reason with his disobedient sibling and prevent the bloodshed that would inevitably follow the forthcoming allied ground operations against Iraqi troops in Kuwait. Incidentally, the bloodshed was prevented after all—the Iraqi soldiers voluntarily and readily surrendered to the allied forces. It could be granted, with great reservations, that that trip still had a modicum of decency on the part of Moscow.

As for this latest mission of envoy Melikhov, I venture to say that it rather humiliates the dignity of a great power. It is obvious that virtually all the tasks of sounding out Iraq's new approaches in the new situation could easily be accomplished by the diplomatic staff of our embassy in Baghdad. A special envoy from the Russian Foreign Ministry is something a little more than just a hand stretched out by Moscow to Husayn. A hand of friendship?

Let us begin with the timing of the visit. It is plain for all to see that the situation around Iraq has begun to change. Those changes were deliberately brought about by the January crisis provoked by Husayn, when he tried to show the new U.S. President that Baghdad cannot be pacified by force and that it should be treated nicely, so to speak. It was no accident that the crisis in Baghdad died down precisely on the day of Clinton's inauguration.

Meanwhile, Husayn launched a vigorous peace offensive on two main fronts: the American front, where he assured Washington of his best intentions; and the Arab front, where he tried to build bridges primarily with Egypt and the Arab League. In other words, he was tackling his main opponents in the region and the world. Significantly, neither Washington nor Cairo wanted to make direct contacts with Baghdad, despite the cynical repentance of the Baghdad dictator and his attempts to coerce them into it. Contacts with Cairo are maintained through PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, and with Washington through the Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations. The leaders of both countries are preserving their reputation and showing dignity, knowing the true worth of Husayn's words and his treachery, and seeing that the only thing the Baghdad dictator understands is force. They are also aware of the moral issues involved: Husayn has been pronounced, and still remains, a war criminal, an aggressor, and in addition, a man guilty of one of the greatest ecological catastrophes in history—a crime against nature and humanity. Contacts with him are at best immoral.

Soon seeing that the Baghdad leader was steering the ship of diplomacy toward his main opponents and leaving Russia overboard, Moscow apparently decided to send a high-ranking mission to Baghdad—moreover, which is important, not only without an invitation from the host, but also at a time when he is showing a blatant, naked disregard for Russia. By the way, he has been extremely consistent in his disregard for the USSR of Gorbachev and the Russia of Yeltsin: On 19 August 1991, Husayn, in company with 'Arafat and Libya's

Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, hastily and decisively recognized the State Committee for the State of Emergency in Moscow, and to this day he has not the slightest repentance for his decision.

This, alas, is the unseemly backdrop against which the Melikhov visit took place. Its initiators—be they in the Foreign Ministry or other agencies—might argue that the basic core of politics is constituted by strategic interests, not moral considerations or emotions. I would venture to doubt that Moscow's trend toward throwing in its lot with the Husayn regime is in Russia's strategic interests.

Hardly anybody would disagree that our country's real strategic interests at this time lie in helping to turn the Persian Gulf area into a zone of relative stability, and in preventing the spread of both Islamic fundamentalism (Iran) and the ideology of nationalism and revenge (Iraq) from there. Those interests call for the promotion of relations with moderate, stable states in the region. The Husayn regime is unique in that it is in conflict with all of its neighbors, except Jordan. That regime is responsible for unleashing two of the biggest wars in the region over the past decade: against Iran in 1980, and Kuwait in 1990. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, our ambassadors to Baghdad defined the regime there as "fascist." It should be added here that Husayn's policy has brought his country into complete isolation which, according to the "father of the nation," can be overcome by undermining the status quo in the region.

Small wonder that there was a reluctance to stop cooperating with Iraq, even after its occupation of Kuwait, on the part of our hard-line communists, or of the omnipotent military industrial sector, which had always seen Husayn as an ideological ally in their "anti-imperialist struggle"—and had seen Iraq itself as a vast market for Soviet arms sales. Not so long ago, such people—they usually call themselves "experienced Arabists"—were also quite numerous at the Foreign Ministry. In August 1990 I happened to witness our ambassador in a Gulf country protesting against the stance taken by the Soviet Foreign Ministry toward Iraq. At that time, the ambassador—who, as a matter of fact, was also a professional Arabist—called our policy "capitulation under U.S. pressure." It came as no surprise, because it was he, while he was an embassy counselor in Baghdad in the mid-seventies, who had strongly recommended that Moscow back Husayn in the hard moments of his ascent to power.

At present, thank God, there are far fewer of these "experienced," but in reality ideologically straightjacketed, specialists at the Foreign Ministry. They are to be found in abundance, however, at other agencies that are directly or indirectly associated with the military industrial sector and largely involved in the sales of Russian weapons abroad. It would seem that this extremely important area of Russia's foreign trade should be strictly subordinate to its foreign policy strategy. We can only be glad to see many of our arms suppliers, who are extensively represented at the current arms fair in Abu Dhabi, establishing very promising ties with customers in the moderate Gulf states. The prospects for selling our weaponry there are immense. However, now that the Iraqi military industry minister has said his country intends to buy weapons in the near future, some of our suppliers are suddenly looking extremely concerned—what if they are left out?

Obviously, this was another factor that influenced the timing and purposes of Melikhov's visit to Baghdad. This very factor, however, raises the question of whether our policy in the Arab world and the Gulf is sliding back toward the times when our policies were basically shaped in military-economic head offices, and then simply rubber stamped by the Foreign Ministry. At least the latest steps by the Russian administration unfortunately give grounds for considering this a possibility. Look at the awkward dash by the Moscow envoy to Baghdad, or Yeltsin's canceled (postponed?) visit to Kuwait. Or take Russia's apparent willingness to resume, at the earliest possible opportunity, talks on supplying Russian arms to Iraq—the aggressor state—and compare it with the inconclusive negotiations on a defense pact with Kuwait—the victim of the aggression.

To sum up, there is a sizable risk that by announcing, under clear pressure from the nationalists, their intention to distance themselves from the U.S. line in a number of regions, the Russian leadership may wipe out the tangible results that have been achieved by the Russian Gulf policy in the past few years—the normalization of relations with moderate states—and bring us back to what we were moving away from, to the situation that can be expressed by a simple formula: Those who buy our weapons are our friends. Naturally, our friends will once again be the radical regimes, and you may rest assured that the next aggressor there will be armed with Russian guns.

Offical Denies Plan To Sell Nuclear Technology to ROK

SK2102075193 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1200 GMT 20 Feb 93

[From "Today's World" program]

[Text] The ROK is satisfied with the work of Russian scholars working at the planning departments of some ROK companies. Pak Tae-sok, chief of the Samsung Ultratechnology Developing Research Institute, said that Russian scholars are playing a key role in our project.

Our station reporter pointed out that Samsung Group is well-known throughout the world as a manufacturer of semiconductors and electronic products and that it competes with Japanese companies in producing electronic products.

Last year, Samsung Group employed two Russian experts. It plans to invite another two Russian experts to work at Samsung Group. With the help of the Russian experts, Samsung Group invented the technology on a laser video cassette recorder. According to the opinions of the leaders of the Samsung Research Institute, this technology surpasses Japanese technology by approximately one year.

According to the data of the ROK Science and Technology Ministry, approximately 400 Russian scholars and technicians worked on contract at various ROK research institutes and planning offices in 1991 and 1992. Ninety-one of them held long-term contracts.

They have been assigned the duty of completing approximately 20 projects. According to the remarks of Yi Chin-kyu, spokesman of the ROK Science and Technology Ministry, another approximately 150 Russian experts will be invited to work at the ROK. He said that the Russian experts will be beneficial to the ROK.

The ROK will constantly employ Russian technicians for the fields in which Japan and other advanced countries have refused to transfer technology to the ROK. The spokesman of the ROK Science and Technology Ministry, however, did not reveal whether the introduction of the Russian technicians is due to the United States and Japan refusing to transfer technology to the ROK, devoting itself to external trade fields, or if it is based on ROK policy.

This is not a matter of simple curiosity. Referring to the issue of promoting cooperation with Russia, Mr. Yi Chin-kyu said that Moscow plans to sell nuclear technology to Seoul.

Sergey Yermakov, director of the information department of the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry, in an interview with IZVESTIYA, declared that the report of Russia's selling of nuclear technology to the ROK is false and that the selling of nuclear technology is absolutely impossible. He added that, in a recent meeting held with ROK official delegates, Russia proposed to them that Russian enterprises should participate in treating ROK nuclear waste. He, however, explained that only when Russia enacts a law on importing nuclear waste to a foreign country and when local administrative organizations approve the law, the dealing of nuclear waste can be possible. He stressed that we do not plan to sell any nuclear technology.

Swedish Police Interrogate Aeroflot Hijacker

LD2102122593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1148 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Vukolov]

[Text] Stockholm, 21 Feb—Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt has congratulated representatives of the Stockholm police on the talks that have been successfully completed with the hijacker of the Aeroflot plane that landed at Stockholm's Arlanda airport on Saturday.

Police inspector Nils Gunnar Danielsson held direct talks with the hijacker, who originally insisted on being given a plane to fly to the United States. It was he who persuaded the hijacker to give himself up.

Afterwards the "air pirate," with his wife and small child, were sent to the Stockholm police department where the first interrogation was carried out. The Swedish news agency reports that the hijacker's name is Demyan and that he is an Azerbaijani. His wife is a Georgian by the name of Marina. During the interrogation she confirmed that she knew of her husband's plans to hijack the plane in order to fly to the United States. They did not request political asylum in Sweden. At the moment it is not clear whether the criminals will be sent to Russia or whether they will be charged in Sweden.

All the passengers of the Tu-134A aircraft, Aeroflot's Stockholm office reported, were put up at a hotel. They were given food and the opportunity to telephone their relatives.

The aircraft was thoroughly examined by the Swedish police with sniffer dogs to ascertain if there were any weapons on board.

The aircraft is now being prepared to return to St. Petersburg.

Defense Ministry Denies Plan To Station Troops in Armenia

LD2102113993 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1100 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] According to information from the Russian-Armenian information center, the Russian Federation Defense Ministry has made an official denial of the Azerbaijan Defense Ministry statement published in the Russian media that two Western Group of Forces motorized infantry divisions withdrawn from Germany will be stationed in Armenia. This intriguing information bears no relation to reality, the denial says.

Yeltsin Spokesman Assails Khasbulatov's 'Destructive' Comments

LD1902164293 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1500 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] [Announcer] The Russian president's press secretary issued a statement today. My colleague Aleksey Abakumov will acquaint you with the text of it.

[Abakumov] Speaking in Novosibirsk, Ruslan Khasbulatov, the head of the Russian Supreme Soviet, criticized the latest pronouncements on television by Boris Yeltsin and, effectively, the Russian president's position on ways of overcoming the crisis of authority in the country. This is stated in a statement issued today by the Russian president's press secretary.

Any politician is, of course, entitled to make a critical analysis, but in this instance we are talking about criticism that is clearly destructive and confrontational.

Basically, the statement says, Ruslan Khasbulatov was attempting to wreck the talks which have started, in order to prevent the division of functions between the executive and legislative branches that society has been awaiting so long. It seems that a permanent political crisis in Russia quite suits the current chairman of the Supreme Soviet. In his Novosibirsk speech, Ruslan Khasbulatov virtually cancelled the agreements reached on Tuesday between himself and the president. Moreover, he broke the gentleman's agreement to avoid public polemics during the period when the working group set up by the president and the Supreme Soviet to draw up terms for the division of the legislative and executive powers is at work.

Observance of ethical principles in politics and strict implementation of agreements do not appear to be qualities that are characteristic of the present parliamentary speaker. This public statement and Khasbulatov's recent publications demonstrate with increased frequency his intention to engage in personal confrontation with the president in a deliberate and increasingly provocative form and on every suitable occasion, the statement says. In no way is this compatible with the degree of his legitimacy, compared with a president who was elected by the entire people, or with the Supreme Soviet chairman's political rating in society. It creates the impression that by denying the president's every step, Ruslan Khasbulatov aims at improving his standing in the eyes of the most extreme conservative forces. Russia's interests—stability and national unity—are being relegated further and further into the background in the speaker's political game, making way for the egoistic interests of a struggle for personal power. It is becoming clear that Ruslan Khasbulatov is discrediting himself more and more, both as a party to negotiations and as a politician one can deal with in Russia. In the unhealthy situation that has evolved around the parliament's speaker, the Supreme Soviet, which, like the presidency, is a fully legitimate body, should probably draw the appropriate conclusions, being guided by the higher interests of Russian statehood, the statement made by the Russian president's press secretary notes.

Ryabov, Shakhray on Yeltsin-Khasbulatov 'Differences'

LD2102230493

[Editorial Report] On Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian at 1900 GMT on 21 February, "Itogi" announcer Yevgeniy Kiselev gives a nine-minute overview of the continuing political wrangle between the executive and legislature in Russia. Yeltsin and Khasbulatov have agreed to set up a working group to resolve their differences, he says, and the accompanying video shows the leaders of their respective representatives interviewed in office surroundings by Kiselev.

Nikolay Ryabov, deputy chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, is asked how he views the constitutional proposals made by Yeltsin on television on Thursday. He replies that Yeltsin has put forward ideas on the Constitution before, initially at a sitting of the Constitutional Commission. "We can only welcome this kind of initiative," he says, "because they are intended to bring stability to our society and especially to the top levels of power, of course. But the actual content of his proposals is another matter. It has to be examined and thought about. On the whole, of course, everyone in the Supreme Soviet leadership at least supports such proposals."

Kiselev enquires whether Ryabov personally believes that an agreement can be reached. Ryabov replies: "We have had the first working meeting with the group appointed by the president. And we must not forget that we do not enjoy as much legitimacy as we could—meaning the Supreme Soviet side, because the Supreme Soviet has to confirm our group and define the content of the actual talking."

Kiselev clarifies this, saying: "Your group's remit and the content of any agreement have to be examined by the Supreme Soviet?" Ryabov concurs. "Will it be a problem?" Kiselev asks. Ryabov replies: "It will be difficult, because some deputies think that there should be no question of any such agreement."

After an editing break, he continues: "All these well-intentioned words and declarations have no basis in law. They are worthless in theory. The only guarantee that we have today is to proceed in a spirit of self-preservation."

The video cuts to Kiselev asking Sergey Shakhray why President Yeltsin has opted to make his negotiating stance public. Shakhray responds that there are two reasons: "First, he has to keep the political initiative during this difficult time. Second, and more importantly, to involve public opinion via the mass media. Given the current situation, this may be the only guaranteed way of achieving an agreement and having it implemented. It will only be possible to achieve agreement when any ruling by the Supreme Soviet, Congress or president aimed at wrecking accord and wrecking any agreement is seen by the public as not only destructive but criminal politicking against the public interest. While the authorities are arguing over what form of governance we should have and so forth, the government has to be able to function effectively. And this is taken care of in the president's plan. Also, there are no constitutional conspiracies being plotted here. What is being proposed is this: Both you and I have certain powers, so let us commit ourselves to drawing up a single and agreed-on document."

Asked for his reaction to comments by Khasbulatov in Novosibirsk, Shakhray replies: "I do not want to categorize the reaction by the speaker, the head of parliament. That is his own political viewpoint. He heads a collegiate authority, the Supreme Soviet, and until the Supreme Soviet gives its official viewpoint I would not pay much attention to what its chairman says. The worst thing about all this is that the Supreme Soviet has not taken a stand. We all think that we all need a constitutional agreement. The president said that, and he set up his group and published his draft. But the Supreme Soviet has yet to decide where it stands. Perhaps it is against it, against an agreement. Or for it. It has not said yes or no yet, so later on it can say that it is just someone's personal opinion. This way of doing it is of course extremely...[sentence unfinished]."

Are the Supreme Soviet representatives constructively inclined toward achieving some kind of agreement, Kiselev asks, or are they wed to their chairman's line? Shakhray replies that he knows them all personally, because they have been on the legislation committee that he heads. "And I have no doubt," he continues, "that as deputies and citizens they are intent on a constructive dialogue and will work to achieve some kind of mutually acceptable outcome".

Yeltsin-Khasbulatov Meeting Seen as 'Political Game'

PM1902151593 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Feb 93 First Edition p 1

[Observer Aleksey Vorobyev article under the "Power" rubric: "Secret Games Behind Closed Doors"]

[Text] Regardless of the noisy demonstrations and thousands-strong rallies that have stirred up Russian cities in recent years, ordinary citizens have long been convinced that real politics are conducted quietly and secretly in our country. But the recent Kremlin meeting of the heads of the executive and the legislature introduced something quite new into the established political practice.

The seclusion of the two leading politicians occurred demonstratively, and the doors were slammed deliberately, as it were, in the faces of their alarmed colleagues. The question suggests itself: Why was this necessary?

You can understand the main reason when you recall that Ruslan Khasbulatov represents a collective organ—the Supreme Soviet—while Boris Yeltsin represents the president...in other words, himself. In my view, the organizers of just this kind of meeting were reckoning that, in the present inflamed situation, the participation of the head of parliament in one-on-one talks would displease a section of deputies.

The second and, probably, chief reason for this kind of meeting lies in the essence of the proposals that the president set forth there. Boris Yeltsin's initiative on convening an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies in March merely to ratify the constitutional agreement at once gives rise to a number of puzzled questions.

Why is the president suddenly trying to get the Congress to approve the agreement when he does not trust it? Does the president's statement that, as long as the constitutional agreement has not been approved, the executive will prepare for the referendum not seem a veiled threat?

I believe that, if the conversation had taken place with more people present, the president would certainly have been asked what he meant by laying down such terms, and he would have been obliged to answer in public. But the closed and brief nature of the meeting shows that there simply was not time either for questions or for answers.

When people want to reach agreement, they go into talks openly, having clearly formulated the main aims and principles. But when they change their position to almost the opposite virtually daily, time after time advancing more and more new initiatives, it becomes obvious that they do not want a mutually acceptable result but are playing a political game. The purpose of these maneuvers is evidently to secure a respite and to regroup.

It is not hard to foresee that, by accepting the new rules of play proposed by Boris Yeltsin, the head of parliament will be forced to accept also the hidden ultimatum contained in the president's initiative. In that case he will come under very severe criticism from deputies and the Congress. Maybe this is what they are counting on in order to sow dissension in the ranks of the representative power and so weaken it?

The following option has probably also been calculated: The Congress does not approve the agreement, and then the president offers his initiatives to the people.

Alas, the executive's means, which they are using in a political struggle, are certainly not aimed at seeking a way out of the political crisis but at securing a little more power.

Shakhray Holds Briefing on Constitutional Accord

PM1902145593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Feb 93 pp 1, 2

[Georgiy Melikyants report: "Russian Authorities Face a Choice: Either Compromise or Referendum"]

[Text] It is well known that President Boris Yeltsin has sent parliament his draft of the agreement by the federal organs of the executive and legislative branches on stabilizing the constitutional system pending the adoption of a new Russian Constitution. Parliament has also received a proposal from a Constitutional Commission working group and the chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Committee on Legislation.

A working group has been formed to formulate the agreement. Vice Premier S. Shakhray, who has been appointed a member of this group, used a news conference to take the "lid of uncertainty" off the principles that the presidential side is incorporating into the draft agreement. Their essence is that 1993 is proclaimed economy year and the government is given a free hand to implement anticrisis measures.

S. Shakhray noted that there are basically two governments currently operating at the federal level—V. Chernomyrdin's cabinet and the structures of the Supreme Soviet. Therefore, in the president's opinion, both sides—the executive and the legislative branches—should undertake not to interfere in the government's economic and administrative activity.

In addition to this issue, Shakhray says that an important point in the presidential draft is the argument that the present deputies' corps should not adopt a Russian Constitution. The president justifies this by saying that society should insure itself against a situation in which the text of the Basic Law depends on the bias of political groupings. Yeltsin believes that the Constitution should be adopted either by referendum or by an especially convened Constitutional Assembly.

The future agreement between the branches, Shakhray stated, should be ratified by an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies or a Constitutional Court decree. If either side breaks its commitments, either the resignation of the president or the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet will ensue. At the same time Shakhray stressed that the parties to the agreement are the president and the Congress of People's Deputies, not the Supreme Soviet which, however, as the standing organ of the Congress, has the power to work on the contents of the document. The main thing, Shakhray recalled the president's words, was to get the economy out of crisis in 1993 and impose a moratorium on actions of political confrontation during this period.

S. Shakhray went on to say that the Constitutional Court could act as guarantor of the agreement, but only in conjunction with the components of the Federation. The corps of judges is formed by parliament, the vice premier explained, and therefore it is hard for the Constitutional Court to act as arbiter in a dispute between the Supreme Soviet and the president.

S. Shakhray did not rule out the possibility of resolving the issue of how power would shape up in Russia on the basis of the future agreement even without a nationwide referendum. If this were to happen, Russians would just be grateful to the politicians, he stressed, but for the time being the president's position is clear: Until the agreement comes into force, the executive branch will prepare a referendum.

Foreign news agencies promptly commented on Shakhray's news conference. REUTER, for example, reported that, in his attempt to reach agreement, Yeltsin has put his tenure of office on the line in order to untie the government's hands on the issue of advancing the reforms. Needless to say, he is striving to obtain similar guarantees from the other side as well.

"The Russian president could waive some of his prerogatives in the spheres of foreign policy, defense, and state security," AFP believes. "As a result of the agreement, parliament will be directly involved in the decision-making process in those areas which up to now have been the head of state's monopoly. Any such commitments by the president will involve major political risk."

Radio Liberty broadcast an interview given by Vice Premier S. Shakhray to its correspondent. The vice premier believes that one way out of the prevailing situation could be the postponement of the referendum in exchange for the agreement between the branches of power. Unless the sides reach agreement within 10 days or the agreement is ratified, the referendum will go ahead on schedule. In any case, Shakhray gave an assurance that the president would submit his draft questions for the referendum by the end of the week.

Answering a question about his forecasts for the future, Shakhray said: "The referendum will be held unless agreement is reached. If, however, the referendum is also wrecked, we will be moving into completely illegal territory." Shakhray added that he is counting on the two sides' instinct for self-preservation, but he acknowledged that the chances are now fairly high that the president's opponents will wreck the conclusion of an agreement.

Baburin Calls Yeltsin's Constitution Plan 'Madness'

MK1902135693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Feb 93 p 2

[Olga Odintsova report: "Baburin Dislikes Yeltsin's Plan. Three Politicians Are Asked To Quit]

[Text] Heads of the Russian Unity parliamentary bloc held a press conference in Parliament Center on 18 February. It was announced that a working meeting of deputies of all levels in the Russia faction is planned for 20 February, and 21 February is slated for the second congress of the Russian National Union.

Prof. Radomir Marajevic of Serbian University presented a special report at the press conference. He said that developments in the Balkans are taking on an increasingly menacing nature, and that Bulgaria and Greece might soon become involved in the conflict. Marajevic thought that although the Russian authorities are siding with Croatia, the Russian people still sympathize with their Serbian brethren.

Commenting on the draft constitutional agreement put forward by Boris Yeltsin, Sergey Baburin described it as madness and added: "If the plan is accepted after all, all honest deputies should resign and go and campaign among the people." Baburin concluded: "The constitutional agreement is something that is wanted by three political failures who should have resigned long ago."

Shumeyko Discusses Constitutional Accord

OW1902184493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1707 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The first meeting of the working group which was set up by a joint decision of Boris Yeltsin and Ruslan Khasbulatov to work out a Constitutional Accord between the legislative and executive branches is scheduled for Saturday, February 20. (If it is worked out and ratified by the Congress of People's Deputies, the document will supersede the April referendum—IF [INTERFAX]). Simultaneously a governmental commission of Vice-Premier Vladimir Shumeyko is going ahead with preparation for the plebiscite. Shumeyko, who also heads the president's team on the commission which is to draft an accord, gave an exclusive interview to Vitaliy Dzhibutiy of Interfax.

Q: In your view, can the presidential draft of the Constitutional Accord resolve the conflict of the executive and the legislative branches?

A: Our draft resolves the conflict at least for the period of implementing the reform. The provision that as long as the accord is in force, the government will manage federal property is especially important in this context. All commanding and executive functions of the Supreme Soviet structures will be either discontinued or taken over temporarily by the federal Cabinet. One major item is dissolution of the Russian Federal Property Fund which, local administration chiefs unanimously agree, obstructs privatization. If it agrees to this formulation, the Supreme Soviet will be committed to make appropriate changes in privatization legislation. Equally important is the proposed take-over of federal extrabudgetary funds for things such as roads, energy, and pensions by the government.

Still, extrabudgetary fund managers will report to the Supreme Soviet as will the Central Bank, Vneshekonombank, Vneshtorgbank, and the State Statistics Committee. Nevertheless, the government will have a free hand in implementing reforms. To streamline the decision-making process, the heads of these agencies must become members of the Russian government and the Congress will have to repeal a constitutional amendment which prevents the president from making heads of agencies which do not report to the government's Cabinet members.

The fourth part of the document is highly significant whereby the president and parliament agree on a kind of moratorium on constitutional changes and declare the existing Congress of People's Deputies incapable of adopting a new fundamental law.

Q: Assuming that the working group agrees on a draft along the lines of the above proposals made by the President, do you expect the March Congress to approve such an accord?

A: This is a very difficult question. I think that the Congress should consent. The December crisis in relations between the president and Congress was resolved by adopting a resolution on stabilizing the constitutional order and appointing Viktor Chernomyrdin to the position of prime-minister. The Congress should remember that the new government has not been in office for long but has shown its commitment to reforms. Rejection of that part of the accord which gives the government a free hand would be tantamount to phasing out reforms. But not a single deputy has ever objected to the reforms as such; what they denounced was Yegor Gaydar's handling of the process. In my view, deputies should appreciate the significance of our amendments to reforms and agree to the essence of the accord. If they do not, we will see beyond any doubt what kind of people they really are and they will have no moral right to represent the people.

Q: Assuming that the Congress does ratify the accord, what are the guarantees of its implementation?

A: Our draft is fairly specific on guarantees. If the Constitutional Court determines that Yeltsin fails to observe the accord, the president will offer his resignation, the resignation to be accepted by the Congress. If the accord is broken by the Supreme Soviet, the president will dissolve parliament and the powers of Supreme Soviet officials will be discontinued.

Q: But if the Supreme Soviet does not recognize its guilt?

A: Then this would imply that the Supreme Soviet does not recognize the authority of the Constitutional Court and you and I cannot allow this to happen. Incidentally, the plethora of if's only proves how difficult it would be to work out an accord even though we will do our best to make this possible. All this just shows that the sooner we hold a referendum on constitutional fundamentals, the better.

Q: You are known as an advocate of confining the plebiscite to three or four questions as well as of the referendum...

A: "Constitutional fundamentals" does not necessarily imply a long, tedious and hardly comprehendible text. True, its no fun making legislation, but the questions can be made easy to understand. For instance, the following question may be offered for the referendum: Do you agree that the President is the head of state? that the Constitution must be adopted by a specially convened constitutional assembly? Should this assembly be elected by popular vote or formed by the President, the Congress, and the Constitutional Court? Anyone can answer yes or no to such questions. The succinct question on the President as head of state, rather than the chief official, will solve numerous constitutional issues. It is obvious that a presidential republic is implied. In effect, all talk that questions easily understandable by any voter cannot be formulated is not serious.

Q: Your proposals seem to be backed by the President on numerous occasions. Are they what Yeltsin was going to make public as alternatives to what the parliament might offer?

A: As a chairman of a governmental commission I want, above all, to work for the cause. I have no other goals in mind and do not want to fit any political image. I am interested in substance...

Q: Holding a referendum on April 11 will probably be difficult because of the dim view the local authorities and political parties take of it, won't it?

A: Yes, holding a referendum when the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies wants it will probably be opposed by some. Again, much will depend on the wording of the questions, on whether they address issues that are real to the electorate. In addition to the questions I mentioned, numerous people want to have a question on private ownership of land included and I think that this would be fair. It is certainly hard to hold a referendum exactly on April 11 while there is no consensus on holding it at all. But we will have to hold the referendum, probably in May or June, but we cannot avoid it.

IF Note: The Russian parliament speaker, Ruslan Khasbulatov, who is now in Novosibirsk, said he had a "fairly cool" attitude to the proposed power sharing agreement. He branded this suggestion as "banal", saying he does not expect it could be "any savior or Messiah." Mr Khasbulatov says he is convinced that the future congress of people's deputies ought to adjudicate that the presidential and parliamentary elections be held simultaneously, ahead of time, in the spring of 1994. He also proposed that the Congress make several amendments into the republic's Constitution to the effect that the president, as the head of state, will nominate the prime minister to be approved by the parliament. The prime minister, in his turn, will form his cabinet. The composition of the government will be approved by the parliament. Ruslan Khasbulatov also wants to adjudicate exclusive accountability of the government before the Supreme Soviet.

Radical Opposition, Centrists Oppose Yeltsin on Referendum

MK2002142293 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Feb 93 p 10

[Lev Abalkin report: "Opposition and Centrists Stand Up Against Referendum"]

[Text] On 19 February, a roundtable meeting was held at the Socio-Political Center to discuss the current constitutional crisis and Boris Yeltsin's latest proposals for overcoming it. The majority of those attending the meeting chose to decline the president's proposals and called for the referendum to be canceled.

The roundtable meeting was attended by, among others, Aleksandr Sterligov, chairman of the Russian National Council; Andrey Fedorov, member of Civic Union's Political Council; and Dmitriy Rogozin, chairman of the Russian Revival Union.

The idea of convening "an informal roundtable meeting" was born immediately after 15 February when the official roundtable broke into two: the presidential and parliamentary ones.

Lev Ponomarev, leader of the Democratic Russia movement, refused to attend the informal roundtable. As a consequence, the roundtable at the Socio-Political Center turned out to be not a forum of parties and movements of various shades, but a consultative meeting of centrist and opposition leaders to draw up a joint strategy.

Dmitriy Rogozin, chairman of the Russian Revival Union, said that there should be a demand for the Congress of People's Deputies to convene and pass amendments to the Constitution that would increase the powers of the legislative branch, in particular giving it the right to form a government. The Congress should also make a decision canceling the April referendum. As for the draft constitutional agreement proposed by the president, Rogozin said it was "unrealistic, and therefore unacceptable."

The majority of those attending the meeting supported Rogozin's statement and called the upcoming constitutional referendum "a means of further deepening the gap between the authorities and society." Aleksandr Sterligov, chairman of the Russian National Council, said that the breakup of the state and the army was continuing at an even faster pace. Thus, according to Sterligov, Moscow's air defense system was recently sold to Kuwait. Andrey Fedorov, who represented Civic Union, said that the economic situation also was very rapidly getting worse: In the 40 days since 1 January, prices grew by an average of 37 percent.

Andrey Savelyev, secretary of the Revival Union, suggested that a "Charter of Civic Peace" denouncing the referendum and demanding early general elections be approved as the roundtable's official document. Whether the document will be ratified is to be decided within the next few days. If the participants in the roundtable sign the charter, it will be the first joint action by "the centrists and the opposition" against the Russian president.

Yeltsin, Entourage Seen Maneuvering for Coup

PM1902182593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Feb 93 pp 1-2

[Aleksandr Shinkin article: "Just What Are Leaders of Democratic Reich Preparing for Us?"]

[Text] The Russian parliament, which has declared 23 February the Day of the Homeland's Defenders, adopted an appeal to Russians Wednesday. In it the members of the Supreme Soviet point out that this date brings together the people's best traditions over their entire history of many centuries and that the homeland's defenders have merited the infinite gratitude of Russians. The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet congratulated them on the festival and wished that this bright day will bring joy and happiness into their homes.

But, while parliamentarians bow and scrape with their congratulations, analysts—according to data from competent sources, as they say—arrive at the conclusion that the president's entourage, dissatisfied with the failure of the provocation at the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies, is drawing up another plan for an anticonstitutional coup d'etat.

The aim is probably the same as before—dissolving (preferably the self-dissolution) of the Congress of People's Deputies, cutting the Supreme Soviet's powers to the bone, and establishing an authoritarian regime.

It is no coincidence that the referendum game has become so protracted. The president realizes that this poll will not bring him success but, on the contrary, will deprive him of his last mainstay—the people for whose sake he is supposedly making such endeavors. True, contrary to Yeltsin's statements, the majority of Russians are experiencing only an unprecedented deterioration in their life, while the mafiosi and officials "from the Kremlin to the farthest-flung districts" really are rejoicing, for the president has created all the conditions for them. But this is by the way.

Some political experts say the following about the essence of the campaign surrounding the referendum: It would benefit the presidential team today if the referendum were canceled not by Yeltsin but by the Supreme Soviet. Then this team will still hold the cards of discrediting via the mass media the highest representative power and its leaders as "putting the brakes on reforms" and "hampering the president."

The plan also provides for a purge of the state apparatus and placing in key posts in presidential and government structures people personally devoted to Yeltsin and to his radical advisers. Sergey Filatov, leader of the president's administration, has already declared this openly. Addressing his staffers, he unambiguously said that only those who are devoted heart and soul, as the saying goes, to the president must work in the structure of his apparatus.

Overt intimidation of those who subscribe to views different from those of the obliging camarilla and who are capable of rising to the defense of the people's interests is taking place in the state apparatus in parallel.

As everyone will probably have noticed, a supposedly resolute struggle—a struggle that everyone understands—has begun against "brazen crime," in addition to efforts to compromise an "obstructive parliament." A highly plausible pretext, according to the scheme of the president's close entourage, for shaping in public opinion the need to introduce a state of emergency. And, naturally, to remove the "unreliable" leadership of the Ministry of Security and the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], which are said to be "incapable" of countering the "criminals and mafia who have cast off all restraint." But the expected cadre changes in these departments do, instead, have a different cause—the "unreliability" "highlighted" by their "perfidious" behavior at the last Congress of People's Deputies.

To all appearances, such a scheme of things received Boris Yeltsin's support, and the mechanism was set in motion. This time, however, his entourage began pursuing its own ends. In the opinion of analysts, it also contemplated the option of the president's possible removal from power as a result of his illness or some other causes.

According to data from well-informed sources, the following questions were constantly being discussed at secret conferences with the president's advisers, at which Gennadiy Burbulis played and still plays the key role: "What is to be done if Boris dies?" and "How to remove the mustachioed jackboot?" (meaning A. Rutskoy—A.Sh.). In posing the question so abruptly and fearlessly, Burbulis most likely holds some "trump card" against the president, which he might play at a decisive moment. Incidentally, Sazhi Umalatova, who worked with Burbulis on a USSR Supreme Soviet committee, recalls the following occasion. She once got into conversation with him about Boris Yeltsin's shortcomings, and in a fit of candor he declared that he knew more than anyone about him. Only they still need Yeltsin as a banner. But, as we have seen for ourselves, floor cloths are easily made out of banners today.

But, be that as it may, the president's draft edict during last December's Congress introduced the following, extremely frank point: "3.5. In the event of the president's death or inability to perform his responsibilities, the president's powers stemming from the Russian Federation Constitution and this law pass to the Russian Federation Government."

Incidentally, no one has refuted the draft of that edict. The president has evidently approved it in outline. It has to be thought that he proceeded from the need, should the worst come to the worst, to insure himself against the transfer of temporary reins of presidential power into the hands of Rutskoy or Khasbulatov, as provided for by constitutional norms. This point, however, is clearly designed to prepare public opinion appropriately for such a turn of events. For the option of a government consisting of the president's radical advisers, possibly headed by Burbulis, their actual leader, is virtually "hidden" in this point of the draft edict.

Does this not account for the feverish haste with which V. Chernomyrdin, the new premier, was surrounded by a tight ring of people close to the radicals, who the previous day had sworn loyalty to Gaydar and declared that without him they would not remain in the government for even one minute?

As regards the technology of the coup itself, it seems to have been worked out. To all appearances, an active role in it belongs to the playing of the "Chechen card," which has already been tried by Mikhail Poltoranin. Use is clearly already being made of the Russians' growing dissatisfaction (which at times is even specially fanned—by A. Sobchak, for example), particularly in Moscow and St. Petersburg, with speculators and the mafia of "Caucasian nationality."

Political experts have noticed that at an MVD briefing on the subject "Internal Troops and Their Role in Stabilization" A. Kulikov, commander of the Internal Troops, declared that the internal troops will put an end to the Chechen mafia both in the North Caucasus and in Moscow before 28 February 1993. He is echoed by the leadership of Moscow Internal Affairs Main Administration, which declares that a blow will be struck against the Chechen grouping in the very near future. Of course, there is no way that such statements fit in with the tactic of a real struggle against organized crime, where the element of surprise plays an important role. But, on the other hand, they correspond fully to the strategy elaborated by the president's team of the anticonstitutional seizure of all power.

In my view, it is in the context of this strategy that we should also regard the powers secured by Sergey Shakhray, which enable him as vice premier and chairman of the State Committee for Nationalities Policy to pass a directive sending troops to any point of the Russian Federation in the event of interethnic conflicts.

The coup scenario could be played out within the next few days. Let us say it like this: During the demonstration and rally scheduled for 23 February their participants come into violent contact with the special-purpose militia detachment, who on this festival last year, let us note, had already been coached in mass riots. Someone uses firearms. Rus has always had plenty of provocateurs and sheer cranks. Counteractions, it has to be thought, are not long in coming. The rally activity intensifies sharply. Clashes are provoked. Chechen gunmen are accused of this. A series of pogroms against commercial structures begins, including theft and arson.... All this gives "grounds" for declaring an interethnic conflict in Moscow and using internal troops to instill order. It is not far from here to a state of emergency.

Of course, I beg you, Father, to spare the Russians this, for they in their time have experienced more than their fair share of misfortunes and suffering. The unexpected report, however, that President Yeltsin was leaving Moscow on vacation merely increased the sense of threat. All this is very reminiscent of the maneuver by Mikhail Gorbachev, who, aware of the imminent imposition of a state of emergency, at first camouflaged himself behind a noisy clamor over the need to resolve with a powerful blow the question "Who wins—the mafia or us?", but then played the "prisoner of Foros." The fruits of this hypocrisy are tragic.

Commentary Discusses Yeltsin's Address to Nation

LD2002150593 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin has described as a power crisis the present state of relations between Russia's top power echelons. In his recent televised address to the nation, he spelled out his attitude to the crisis and proposals to settle it. Commentary by Vitaliy Gurov:

[Gurov] That very calm and considered statement was recorded at the presidential country house near Moscow. The fact that Boris Yeltsin appeared before viewers in unofficial clothes shows that he probably wanted to revive his image as our man. The president stood for the interests of Russia and its people. Under the present difficult situation, it's the question of rescuing the enormous Russian state. An economic collapse, territorial disputes, and possible inter-ethnic conflicts; such may be the price of confrontation between the executive and legislative power branches.

The ambiguities and vague definitions contained in the current Constitution make it possible to interpret rather freely some provisions of the main law. Each of the branches often attempts to assume functions of the other, which leads to a muddle and a power vacuum. Boris Yeltsin called on the executive and legislative authorities to find such a solution that, though unable to remove the crisis completely, would noticeably weaken it. One variant is a national referendum on the basic clauses of the new Constitution. But many observers and politologists believe the results may be far from expected. Strictly speaking, the referendum may simply be ruined. Many public movements and heads of the republics and regions making up the Russian Federation, have come out against a referendum. There are fears that the low political activity of the population may also bring about its failure.

Another way out on which President Boris Yeltsin and Chairman of Parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, have already actually attempted to embark, is a constitutional agreement between the two power branches. In his address, Boris Yeltsin read out the main provisions of the presidential draft of the agreement. These include, in the first place, a commitment of the president and Parliament not to meddle in each other's affairs. Under the draft, Russia's supreme body of power, the Congress of People's Deputies, has no right to intervene in the executive power's prerogatives. Neither the president nor Parliament will initiate amendments to the existing Constitution. Boris Yeltsin suggested the new fundamental law be adopted by special formed constitutional assembly. He categorically rejected the idea of simultaneous re-elections of the deputy corps and the head of state.

It remains to be seen how Parliament will react to the presidential proposals. So far, only Ruslan Khasbulatov's position is known. He disagrees with the president on many points. Perhaps early next week Parliament will spell out its decision. Earlier, the president and the speaker agreed that a joint draft of a constitutional accord be prepared before the end of this month. Meanwhile, preparations for a referendum are continuing, so that everything is ready, should the two power branches eventually fail to come to agreement.

Poltoranin Warns Balance of Power Favors Local Interests

LD2202101293 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] The forthcoming referendum is possibly the last attempt to settle the power issue in Russia peacefully, Mikhail Poltoranin, head of the Federal Information Center, has told ITAR-TASS. He is convinced that, as an instrument of power, the Congress is incapable of saving Russia from dismemberment because it is a mechanical sum of local interests. The election of deputies, which was held according to a territorial rather than political principle, has inevitably led to deputies lobbying their regions. They are forced to defend the interests of their constituencies, and this transfers a proportion of political power away from the center to the local level. Thus, Mikhail Poltoranin believes that the balance of power is being tipped in favor of local interests. Logically, the development of events is clear. There cannot be a void at the center of power, Poltoranin said, but attempts by certain representatives of parliament to push aside the president and create their own executive structure will inevitably lead to monopolistic domination by that same mechanical sum of local interests and will be fraught with the most dangerous consequences.

Chernomyrdin Specifies Government's Priorities

OW1902173193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin admitted that unemployment will be growing in Russia and urged industrial leaders to think of ways of creating new jobs. He told delegates at the Congress of Russian Builders' Union on Friday [19 February] that there were 4 million unemployed in Russia, noting, however, that the government had contradictory figures.

He said there were five priority areas in the government's activity, among them the fuel and energy complex, food supplies, conversion programs, science, above all fundamental research and the social sphere.

Russia can no longer provide the population with food, imported using hard-currency gained from selling oil and gas, said Chernomyrdin. Russian farmers can produce enough food if only we concentrate on their problems, he added.

The Congress of the Builders' Union which represents the interests of 6 million builders, proposed that the government work out a special program for stabilizing the construction industry and also proposed a 50% income tax cut for organizations handling state orders.

Chernomyrdin Favors Close Dialogue With Trade Unions

OW2002175893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1717 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Addressing the meeting of the leaders of the Federation of Russian Independent Trade Unions (FRITU), the Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin favored a close dialogue between the government and trade unions "which should be implemented in practice." He promised to regularly invite the representatives of the Federation to the sessions of the Council of Ministers to discuss Russia's important social-economic problems.

Chernomyrdin pointed out that the major task of the government is not to deviate from the reforms process and simultaneously to prevent further lowering of the living standard of the republic's population. "If we did not pay attention to the living standard and did not depend upon the living cast then we could implement any reform within a half of a year," he declared.

The Russian Premier emphasized that he stands for establishing relations with the former Soviet republics on the principles of a common market and "on mutual parities." According to Chernomyrdin, the republics of the former Soviet Union should be granted an opportunity to procure real estate in Russia, to participate in the trading of industrial enterprises. The leader of the Russian government believes that Russia should enjoy the same rights in the former Soviet republics.

Chernomyrdin promised "to remove the ban" on the usage of right hand drive cars in the Far Eastern region and added that "it does not apply to the whole country" (in accordance with the recent resolution of the Russian government a ban on the registration of right hand drive cars is to be introduced in Russia since summer 1993 and their exploitation will be prohibited since 1995). The Premier reported that the draft of an appropriate governmental resolution is being developed.

Foreign Ministry Condemns NRP Demonstration

LD1902150093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1405 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 19 Feb—The Russian Foreign Ministry issued the following statement today:

"On 18 February neo-fascist thugs belonging to Russia's 'National Republican Party' [NRP] staged a rally at the entrance to the Foreign Ministry building on Smolensk Square. This meeting had not received clearance from city hall. The demonstrators overstepped the mark which distinguishes words—most of which were foul language—from criminal actions. A fire was started. More than 10 signal flares were fired at the building. Windows were broken and a fire started in service areas. The lives of staff were put in danger. Substantial material damage has been caused.

"This stunt clearly demonstrates what the 'national patriots' are pushing the country toward and how they are undermining Russia's prestige. Flirtation and connivance with them is intolerable.

"The organizers of this action must be brought to book."

Defense Ministry Warns Officers' Union Not To Meet

LD2002085093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0821 GMT 20 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow February 20 TASS—The implementation of the military reform and the level of combat preparedness of the Army and the Navy will be discussed at a two-day All-Army officers' meeting, which opens today. The venue of the meeting is kept secret by its organisers, a spokesman for the Officers' Union told ITAR-TASS. The only thing that was made public was that its participants are meeting today at 09.00 outside the Lenin Museum. The agenda of the meeting and the number of its participants are also kept secret.

Journalists have to rely so far on the month-long documents circulated on Friday by the organising committee of the meeting at the Proletarskiy District Council. It follows from the appeal of the organising committee that, aside from discussing the "tasks of the officers' corps", they plan to "revive the structre of the All- Army officers' meeting in the armed forces and to elect its steering bodies", and "to hear reports of senior officials of public and other organisations on the implementation of programmes connected with the social protection of servicemen." The organisers of the All-Army officers' meeting believe that "military problems will become more acute" and that they "cannot be resolved without the participation of broad army circles, primarily middle-rank officers."

The Russian Defence Ministry regards the holding of the All-Army meeting as illegal and refers to the order of the defence minister of September 12, 1992 and "regulations on the officers' meeting in the armed forces of the Russian Federation". In accordance with that document, an officers' meeting operates most on the regiment level and fulfills mostly educational tasks. It describes the allied officers' meeting of the garrison as the supreme steering body of the independent public organisation of officers. Senior officials of the Defence Ministry are concerned over the fact that the Officers' Union is provoking officers by its actions to the violation of the Army discipline.

Leaders of the Coordinating Council of officers' meetings of the CIS Allied Armed Forces express similar concern. In their opinion, the convocation of the All-Army officers' meeting without preliminary coordination with the Russian defence minister is running counter to the existing legislation and may destabilise the situation in Army units.

Officers' Union Meets; State Leaders Accused of 'Treason'

LD2002140793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1300 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] The All-Army Officer Assembly opened in Moscow today. Stanislav Terekhov, who heads the central public council of the Officers' Union, was elected chairman of the assembly. In his hour-long opening speech Terekhov accused the top echelons of the state and military power of high treason. The RIA agency reports that according to Terekhov, Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev is playing a key role in what is happening.

Union Seeks Grachev's Resignation

LD2002162593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] An alternative position on military reform and the combat readiness of the Army and Navy will be formulated at the two- day All-Army Officers Assembly [AAOA], which began today. The venue was kept secret by the organizers, but, thanks to our correspondents, we have received a report from that assembly.

[Begin N. Pavlov video report showing meeting in progress] The All-Army Officers Assembly is being attended by serving Army officers, the Security Ministry, the Internal Affairs Ministry and also by retired military men from the regions of the former union. According to Stanislav Terekhov, the flower of the opposition and representatives of communist and national-patriotic parties and organizations are also taking part in the assembly. [Video shows banner behind platform, saying "For the state [za derzhavu], honor and dignity!"]

[S. Terekhov, AAOA organizing committee chairman] The Armed Forces are on the verge of collapse, just like our state. Previously we observed this, but now the patriotically minded section of the officer corps has itself decided to declare that we have no time to just wait for the complete breakdown, the complete collapse.

[Pavlov] Since it claims to voice the opinion of the whole of the Russian officer corps, the assembly has no wish to acquiesce in the reduction of the army and of armaments or to the conversion of the military-industrial complex. In the draft decision, one can sense an obvious nostalgia for the previous institution of army political bodies, and it contains a call for Defense Minister Grachev to resign and for him to be handed over to an officers court of honor.

Plans To Form Permanent Structure

OW2102174293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1659 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An assembly of officers which ended on Sunday in Moscow decided to hold an officers assembly next week with representatives from all units and divisions of the Russian Army and Navy and to "form a permanently operating structure" of the All-Army Officers Assembly.

Earlier, in an appeal to society and to people's deputies, assembly participants demanded Pavel Grachev's resignation from his post as Russian Defense Minister for "corruption, incompetence, and misuse of power." They recommend Colonel-General Vladislav Achalov for the post.

During an assembly organized by the Proletarsk regional council on Manezh Square on February 23 the officers plan to "ratify" the decision they made "through a vote by the people."

Air Force Resumes Supply of TU-160 Aircraft

93UM0404A Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Feb 93 p 1

[Item by Viktor Beltsov, Russian Air Force Press Service: "Russian Air Force Aircraft Fleet Augmented"]

[Text] Despite economic difficulties, the resupply of Russian Air Force combat equipment continues.

Recently an additional TU-160 strategic missile carrier, whose production, as we know, had been suspended, was sent to augment the Russian Air Force's Long-Range Aviation Fleet.

State Security Bodies End Conference

LD2102205693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2051 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By Crime-Press correspondent Pavel Ovchinnikov for TASS]

[Text] Moscow February 21 TASS—"State security bodies of the Russian Federation should no longer exist in their present form and with their current composition of executive officers," said a resolution adopted by the international conference "KGB: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow" that ended in Moscow on Sunday.

"We believe that the development of the democratic process in the country is impossible in the situation when state security services continue to perform functions of state management. Attempts to reorganise the KGB after August 1991 in order to bring its activities in line with law failed," the resolution said.

The participants in the conference which was held in Moscow's parliamentary centre called for establishing an "effective mechanism of parliamentary and judicial control over the activity of security services."

They also adopted several appeals, including to President Boris Yeltsin, urging him to withdraw his decision appointing V. Cherkesov as city and regional security chief in St. Petersburg. They described Cherkesov as "a well-known fighter against dissidents."

The conference also called on the Russian Constitutional Court to overrule presidential decree No. 20 of January 14, 1992 "on the protection of state secrets of the Russian Federation" as "not juridically motivated." The participants also adopted a resolution denouncing mercenarism.

The second stage of the conference will be held in Moscow from May 28 till May 30, 1993.

Bakatin Calls For New KGB Role

LD2102013993 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1630 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Report by unidentified announcer on interview with former KGB chief Vadim Bakatin by correspondent Tatyana Zeleranskaya; recorded remarks from Bakatin in Russian with superimposed English translation; place and date not given; from the "At First Hand" program]

[Excerpt] [Studio announcer] Tatyana Zeleranskaya decided to interview the former KGB chief, Vadim Bakatin, when a conference by the public called "The KGB: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" took place in Moscow. One of the guests at the conference, physicist Yuriy Orlov, expelled from the country by the previous regime, said in an interview that the KGB still posed a threat to the people. That was the first question Radio Moscow's reporter put to Vadim Bakatin.

[Bakatin] The risks posed by the KGB, or what has been left of the KGB, is grossly overestimated. This is the worst exaggeration one can imagine. At the same time, the real threat comes from the social and economic situation. The main dangers are there in the social tension that has been produced by economic problems. Certain political forces may take advantage of the grave situation and breathe a new life into certain Bolshevik ideas. This is the main threat. The KGB is just one of the elements of the previous system. Roughly speaking, our party and state system would not have lasted without the KGB. The system is no more, there is no Communist Party and no Soviet Union, there is no monopoly in ideology. Once the system disappeared so did the KGB, one of its elements.

In the physical sense it is still there. It has lost its main function, the struggle against dissidents. The KGB simply does not have that function today. However, it is a totally different question that in the KGB there are the very same people. Where should they go? How do you think you can fire all the intelligence officers today? You may need them tomorrow. Where will you find them, in that case? Our state, just as any other, must have special services. They must be controlled by Parliament and act within the framework of the law and observe human rights. This cannot be achieved overnight. First, a package of laws has to be written, the KGB must be thoroughly checked. If there are some orthodox people who place ideology before professionalism, probably they will have to be dismissed. But in general the personnel has to be preserved and re-educated gradually.

[Announcer] Many thought that the KGB had changed little, if at all, when its officials refused to attend that conference. However, the delegates were invited to gather at the KGB club in the center of Moscow, and they found the offer laughable. KGB officials refused to participate in the conference officially, but agreed to let the delegates gather at their club, where probably every sigh is recorded on tape.

[Bakatin] In the KGB there are different people. It is deplorable that the KGB has kept away from that conference instead of jumping at the opportunity to take part in it to help those people find new bearings and reform the agency. It is more or less easy to decentralize the KGB, something I was busy with all the 107 days I was KGB chief. Changing ideologies would be far more difficult. There can be no haste. There must be patience and assistance from the public, but they try to dismiss it offhand. In any case, I would not exaggerate the dangers posed by the KGB. This is just a topical issue, a fashionable issue. [Words indistinct] generations of experts on Soviet affairs [words indistinct] to earn a living. Now that the opportunity is about to disappear, they have been trying to artificially keep up the interest in that (?concept).

We cannot drop our secret service, in particular in these troubled days in a country like ours, stuffed with nuclear arms. A close watch must be kept on all that. The world is aware of that, too. Nuclear power stations alone can cause great irreparable damages should some maniac get there. For that reason, of course, the secret services must be operational and on the alert. As for political surveillance, there should be none. However, there must be measures to monitor the political situation. You will probably agree that there may appear certain political organizations that may seek the seizure of power or the incitement of nationalism and chauvinism. Somebody has got to keep an eye on that, on the nation's security. This is the security service's job. That service can have a different name, of course.

[Announcer] A special fund has been set up under Science Academy member Shatalin, and it is called Reform. In the Shatalin fund, Vadim Bakatin is in charge of the department that studies politics and interethnic relations. Any recommendations to the Government ready yet?

[Bakatin] One and all must see to it that Russia should not have the same plight as the union—to prevent the country's collapse. We don't want nationalism and separatism to play more dirty tricks on us. I believe that we can handle our problems in a constitutional way. We must have a federation where each member will have the same rights as others, unlike in the past when some republics had more rights and others less. The federation will be much stronger if the rights of its members are equal. These are our recommendations to the president and the government. True, it would be naive to think that our small group of researchers will be able to resolve the problems in the nationalities' relations. We by no means try to make an insight into the future. We are working on specific recommendations on how to deal with current problems. For instance, we have our own ideas of how to ease tension in relations with Chechnya and Tatarstan, which have declared their independence, and of how to deal with the Abkhazian problem. We have been looking into all of these problems, and we will be making our proposals to the president. [passage omitted]

Supreme Soviet

Khasbulatov Spokesman Rebuts Yeltsin's Secretary

LD2002101493 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 20 Feb 93

["Text" of statement issued by Konstantin Zlobin, Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov's press secretary, on 20 February; place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] On 19 February, the mass media distributed the latest statement by Vyacheslav Kostikov, the Russian president's press secretary. It is clear from this statement that one more figure has appeared in Russia, directing Russia's policy under the president's roof. He makes hasty statements without reading documents and evaluates the activities of the Supreme Soviet chairman and the corps of deputies and insults them, being only an official in the president's apparatus.

For the umpteenth time now, Vyacheslav Kostikov is attempting to act in the role of judge of one of our country's highest statesmen. His assessments are affecting the process of political stabilization in a most pernicious way.

The account of the Russian parliamentary speaker's position on the referendum and the constitutional agreement, which followed after the president's address on these same issues, was presented to the Russian public as an attempt to wreck the talks on overcoming the power crisis in the country. However, if one fully understands Ruslan Khasbulatov's speech at the Novosibirsk conference of chairmen of Soviets of People's Deputies and heads of the administrations of republics, krays, and oblasts of Russia and if one acquaints oneself with the materials of the conference, then one clearly sees that those assembled profoundly assessed the socioeconomic and political situation in the country.

Regarding the proposal of the head of state on an agreement between the president and the Supreme Soviet on the division of powers, Ruslan Khasbulatov said literally the following: The agreement in question is a very serious matter, and it is necessary to work on it very thoroughly and thoughtfully.

I mention this because every time the Russian Supreme Soviet chairman's position does not coincide with the viewpoint of the presidential team, Vyacheslav Kostikov almost accuses the Supreme Soviet chairman of treason in a far-fetched and irresponsible way.

Such attacks by the president's press secretary are becoming an everyday occurrence. This time, Vyacheslav Kostikov also gave guidance to the parliamentarians to deal with their chairman.

What will Vyacheslav Kostikov order to be done for the sake of the supreme interests of Russian statehood after the next address by Russia's Supreme Soviet chairman?

Khasbulatov Denies 'Catalyst' Role in Leadership Conflict

LD2002140193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1255 GMT 20 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Sergey Podyapolskiy]

[Text] Novosibirsk, 20 Feb—Russia's Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov disagrees with the opinion that it is he who is a catalyst in the conflict between the legislative and executive powers in Russia. "I am not imposing the confrontation," he stated, speaking today at a meeting with scientists at Novosibirsk Academy. At the same time, he said, as chairman of Parliament, I cannot remain silent when "the Constitution is being violated" and logic and democracy suffer," and when there are attacks on the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies. "We are prepared to compromise, but when one side is set not so much on a struggle, but rather on waging a war, it is very difficult to work," Ruslan Khasbulatov stated. "I do not want to play the part of Lukyanov, who surrendered his powers one after another to the president, who eventually collapsed under the burden of these powers, being unable to master even half of them," the speaker of parliament stated.

Ruslan Khasbulatov once again stressed that he believes the Congress of People's Deputies, "with all its faults," is the only force capable of settling the conflicts between different branches of power and keeping the country from disintegration. Ruslan Khasbulatov also criticized the mass media. "They promote an anti-people, 'made-to-order' policy, and manipulate public opinion," he said.

Speaking about the federal government's activity, Ruslan Khasbulatov stated that the new premier really wants to improve the economic situation, although it will not be possible to put right all previous mistakes. The government is changing the course of the economic development, passing on the main stress of the reforms to the regions.

The chairman of the parliament sees the last year as "a year of great downfalls and great shocks." The Supreme Soviet failed to put up resistance to the reckless policy of Gaydar's government," he said. Ruslan Khasbulatov pointed out that he personally respects Yegor Gaydar. He is a good economist and could become a good economic minister, the parliamentary chairman said, but "he should be carrying out his experiments somewhere on the moon where there are no people." Ruslan Khasbulatov will depart for Moscow today.

Khasbulatov: Only Congress Can Prevent Collapse

OW2002145793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1413 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ruslan Khasbulatov, the head of the Russian parliament, favors creation of "a constitutional-democratic republic of a truly representative nature" in the Russian Federation. During his meeting with the scientists of the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the Novosibirsk academic town on Saturday, he spoke about the principles of the future state system in this nation.

Khasbulatov pointed out that speaking about the new Constitution, somebody "tries to hammer into the heads of millions of people such abstract notions as presidential republic and parliamentary republic." "One can think that there is no parliament in the presidential republic. In the United States, a classical example of a presidential republic, the congress enjoys far greater rights than our harassed and badgered Supreme Soviet." He emphasized that he supported a one-stage parliament and at the same time he proposed "to take off the issue how to get rid of the congress from the agenda." He called to convene the Congress of the People's Deputies more often and added that under the present situation it is "the only real force which can prevent the country from a collapse." In response to a question concerning the conflict with the executive power, Khasbulatov said that he himself does not present the cause of the confrontation. "If I remain silent with respect to the published (presidential—INTERFAX) text of the draft of the constitutional agreement—he stressed—it will mean that I begin a confrontation. And if I say that it contradicts to the Constitution and logic then it means that I impose confrontation. But I do not want to repeat the role of A. Lukyanov who, as the head of the Soviet parliament, was always silent." Khasbulatov underlined that "it is difficult to work when one party is permanently inspired even not to fight but to wage a war and strives to evade the law." According to Khasbulatov, the Supreme Soviet "has no possibility to exert control over the activity of the President and the parliament" in all fields, in particular, concerning the spending of the currency budget.

The chairman of the Supreme Soviet said that "a secret political bureau, which has been existing for 75 years in our country, is acting in the system of the executive power, but now it has become more definitely structured."

Khasbulatov Blames Government for Loss of Science Policy

LD2002121893 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] The meeting of the leaders of the two branches of power, legislative and executive, in all oblasts, republics, krays and autonomous entities forming part of Russia and also in the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg ended in Novosibirsk today. The meeting was attended by Ruslan Khasbulatov, Yuriy Yarov, Vasiliy Barchuk, Nikolay Medvedev, Aleksandr Pochinok, Veniamin Yakovlev, and other officials. Our correspondent Tamara Vintsemerova reports.

[Vintsemerova] Those attending the meeting spent today in Akademgorodok. They visited six academic institutes—the Institutes of Nuclear Physics, Catalysis, Cytology and Genetics, and others. They toured several experimental production centers. In other words, they obtained a first-hand idea of the state of Siberian science. At a meeting in the House of Scientists, Academician Valentin Koptyug informed the visitors about the scientific center's state of crisis. Incidentally, a hearing on the state of the science towns, including Novosibirsk's Akademgorodok, which, does nevertheless have a powerful base for the creation of a modern technological estate, is to take place in the Supreme Soviet on 2 March. Academician Valentin Koptyug conveyed to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation [Khasbulatov] preliminary proposals for the creation of technological estates and science towns in Russia.

Summing up the meeting and answering numerous questions from Novosibirsk scientists, Ruslan Khasbulatov agreed that the country has, unfortunately, forfeited its scientific and technical policy. But the responsibility for that has to be borne, in his view, exclusively by the government, rather than by the Supreme Soviet. In general, much of his speech was devoted to an analysis of the contradictions and disagreements between the Supreme Soviet and the government. Ruslan Khasbulatov also complained that the Supreme Soviet had no opportunity to monitor [kontrolirovat] the government's activities. As at the plenary sitting of 19 February, he declared that 1992 was a year of failures and mistakes. So, in the current year, it is necessary not to hold a referendum, but to correct the mistakes.

Khasbulatov: Next 10 Days To Reveal Attitude to Referendum

LD2202130093 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Feb 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The debate over the referendum continues unabated. Ruslan Khasbulatov, speaker of the Russian parliament, who is in Finland on an official visit, even there mentioned problems of internal policy. He said that over the next 10 days the population's attitude towards it will finally become known. If we are persuaded that the people do not welcome this referendum we will be obliged to cancel it, stated Ruslan Khasbulatov.

Some Party Leaders Back Khasbulatov on Referendum

LD1902174893 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1500 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report by correspondent Yevgeniy Zherebenkov]

[Excerpt] Leaders of parties which hold rather different views gathered to talk about the crisis of authority and the April referendum, a subject which is so topical at the moment. Gennadiy Zyuganov, recently elected chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party; Petr Fedosov, one of the leaders of the Civic Union; Aleksandr Sterligov, chairman of the executive committee of the Russian National Assembly; Vyacheslav Shostakovskiy, co-chairman of the Republican Party, and other very well-known politicians attended the roundtable. Differing views did not prevent them from agreeing on one main point: The country is experiencing a crisis of authority at the moment, and the planned referendum—if it actually takes place—will only exacerbate this crisis. Too many questions remain to be answered. Who will interpet the results of the referendum? What will be done if the referendum proves abortive because people are unwilling to take part in it or because the answer to principal questions turns out to be a negative one? What guarantee is there that the referendum conditions will be observed?

The participants in the meeting were also very unhappy about the idea of convening a constituent assembly. However, they did support the convocation of a special Congress of People's Deputies, as the sole legitimate body entitled to make amendments to the Constitution and to adopt the election code. The meeting approved the idea of holding early presidential and Supreme Soviet elections. [passage omitted]

Ryabov Comments on Referendum, Supreme Soviet

LD2102011393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1724 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Interview with Nikolay Ryabov, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, by unidentified correspondents on the results of the first session of the working group to draw up a constitutional agreement; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ryabov] This was only a preliminary working meeting. For our part, on the part of the Supreme Soviet, the legitimization of the group that will act on behalf of the Supreme Soviet is needed. And a decision by the Supreme Soviet to participate directly in this process is also needed. And a decision by the Supreme Soviet as to what should be the subject under discussion is needed too.

[Correspondent] On the one hand, a constitutional agreement is under discussion. On the other hand, there is the intention to convene an extraordinary congress. Is this the topic of discussion?

[Ryabov] Yes, yes. Well, I do not think that whether to convene an extraordinary congress will be the topic of discussion. In my view, a decision to cancel the referendum is already pre-determined. Not the issue of the referendum, but the resolution of the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies on the stabilization of the constitutional order in the Russian Federation should be put on the agenda. It is necessary to find, to work out a political mechanism which will make it possible for us to overcome a constitutional crisis, the crisis of power, and to a certain degree the political crisis, and which will make it possible to concentrate our efforts, first and foremost the efforts of the authorities, on implementing economic transformations and on resolving social problems. That is what in fact worries people, labor collectives, leaders, and administration at all levels at present. They are not concerned about the referendum. This is a matter of secondary importance to them. Moreover, as I have said, in my view it is predetermined. They are concerned with the state of production, the amount of food reserves, and the correlation of prices and incomes.

Take the problem of executive power at present. We do not have enough powers to resolve the problem successfully. First of all, one needs to clarify: who does not have enough powers? Immediately one thinks of the president. But I am sorry, presidential power here is not the same as presidential power in America, where the President heads executive power, where he heads the cabinet of ministers, let's call it this for the sake of argument, i.e. he heads all economic activities. Here the government does it.

Let's look into how the government can be strengthened and how to give more opportunities and powers to it under its great responsibility. Let's work in this direction.

The banking system is unable to cope. That's obvious. And no matter how much the blame is laid on someone else, in the first place, the banking system is putting a brake on that. The bank is an independent structure, an independent structure accountable to the Supreme Soviet. A look must be taken at how you together use that institution—the parliament, the government—to ensure that it earns money and serves the interests of the national economy. And it's time to give the government the opportunity to use all the necessary instruments of operational influence on the economy. Production will begin to be revived. People will work, will receive their wages. If an enterprise is independent, you will receive as much as you earn. So store shelves will be filled, won't they? Some kind of conditions are created for changing the trend for the continuous growth of prices, inflation, and so forth. On the whole, that concerns each of us. And it is namely because of this that people very soberly—regardless of which social strata they come from or the degree to which they are educated—are saying that's enough of your fighting there, we're fed up with that already! Please deal with the work, deal with it. You see what sort of a situation we are in. And, well, we must really listen to that and the appropriate answer must be given to that.

[Correspondent] I would like to return once again to the constitutional agreement, and if it is adopted, if it is elaborated, is there any point in holding another emergency congress and what guarantees are there are this agreement will put, if not an end, well, will avert somewhat this so-called conflict, the second one?

[Ryabov] Well, all right. Vera Nikolayevna, that is one of the stereotypes which is actively being inculcated into the conscience of society today. But in the first place the very word, the very combination of the words constitutional agreement is gobbledygook [ot lukavogo]. It is incorrect. Such a term won't be spoken confidently. Such a term simply won't be admitted.

That is the first thing. The second is, where's the guarantee, you asked, yes?—that it will be implemented if it is concluded? Well, if a foundation is provided for this document, and it is created and drawn up and signed, and based on the law, the Constitution, then there you have the formal guarantee that it will be carried out. If by such a document an attempt is made to obviate the law, obviate the Constitution, remove some existing social, state, and legal institutions, in the form, let us say, of the congress, or something else, life, activity, the making of decisions and so on, then an agreement of this kind—or protocol, or whatever you call it, I don't yet know—they will be, in themselves, lifeless and there cannot be any guarantees. You understand? And all this that has been written in the proposals, supposedly, of the president—I'm not saying, because the draft does not yet bear the signature of the president, I can't say that this is a presidential document, and there it is written that if anything should happen, the president will disband the Supreme Soviet and decide when and by what procedure he will set new elections—all that is absolutely frivolous. Excuse me. It can be discussed, savored, recounted, you can build whole programs around it—but I'll say briefly and clearly that it's not a serious proposition. All honest words, all assurances, if they are based on truth, on the law, are not without sense. In the formal sense, the Constitutional Court can act as guarantor, of course. But we must speak of cooperation, of interaction between the powers, on solving the problems shared in common by our people. If we can do that, well and good; if not, then the question of early supplementary elections to both will be on the agenda, absolutely naturally and necessarily. We've had enough, surely? We've looked at these things long enough. Nothing is being achieved, you don't know how. Make way for someone else.

Abdulatipov Addresses Hearing on Republic's 'Integrity'

LD2202111393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1005 GMT 22 Feb 93

[ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

Moscow, 22 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—To make the Federation treaty work normally, the Russian parliament should adopt no less than 100 legislative acts, said Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities. He spoke today at the parliamentary hearings on "The integrity of the Russian Federation and Regional Policy." He added that in connection with the implementation of the treaty 25 laws adopted by the Supreme Soviet during the past two years are already in need of amendment.

The chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities considers that even among the deputies there is a certain underestimation of the importance of this legal document which has become part of the Russian Constitution. "Many of us have entirely failed to notice that since the signing of the Federative Treaty we have been living in a new Russia," he said. This, in the view of Ramazan Abdulatipov, is the source of the two extreme tendencies in the development of regional politics: the desire for "ultra-centralization" on the one hand, and the "loosening" ["razrykhleniye"] of statehood by the granting of many powers to the subjects of the Federation, on the other.

Abdulatipov noted that the Federative Treaty "is not working as it should," and said that "in the localities independent and spontaneous work is being done on the formation of regional associations without much support or help from the federal organs of power".

The chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities criticized the financial and economic policy of the Russian state. "We have transferred many billions of rubles to the localities, to the subjects of the Federation," he said, "without giving any thought to how they would be spent." As a result, he said, the credits have been used up, and the money is not being returned to the Federal treasury.

Deputies Reject Constitutional Agreement

OW2002174593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1715 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The participants of the conference of the People's Deputies of all levels which was convened by the parliamentary faction "Russia" on Saturday in the Russian House of Soviets believe that the parliament should decline the draft of the constitutional agreement proposed by President Boris Yeltsin without any consideration. The conference attended by about 200 deputies evaluated the presidential version of the agreement as "unacceptable".

The participants of the conference addressed the Russian Supreme Soviet with a request to support the initiative about a session of the People's Deputies Councils of all levels. They believe that such forum should consider the issue about the attitude to the presidential version of the constitutional agreement and to the referendum.

The majority of the deputies oppose conduction of a referendum and submitting the issue on confidence in the President and in the Congress to the referendum. A Russian people's deputy Dmitriy Stepanov declared that at present the Supreme Soviet Committee on legislature is developing an amendment to the Russian decree "On referendum" which foresees responsibility for an ungrounded conduction of a referendum.

Deputy Vladimir Isakov believes that the draft agreement should preliminary be coordinated with all Federation's subjects. He declared that the observance of the Constitution cannot be an object of bargains and said that if the Constitutional court becomes a guarantor of the agreement then at the next congress the bloc "Russian Unity" will raise the issue about re-elections of the Constitutional court.

Anatoliy Lukyanov, the former chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, was expected to address the conference. However, according to the coordinator of the faction "Russia" Sergey Baburin, he did not come to the conference due to his poor health. It is expected that Lukyanov will speak at the 2nd Congress of the Russian popular union in the building of the Oktyabrskiy regional council of the Moscow people's deputies on Sunday.

Rumyantsev Finds Agreement 'Hardly Acceptable'

OW1902173593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A working group of the constitutional commission circulated among lawmakers its variant of a constitutional agreement or "a coordinated proposal to strengthen and develop the constitutional system of the Russian Federation." It suggests cancelling an all-Russia referendum on the fundamentals of a new constitution and convening the 9th Congress of People's Deputies in September 1993 to adopt a new constitution. This concerns the draft of a new constitution, the fundamentals of which were approved by the 6th Congress of People's Deputies in April 1992 and were subsequently endorsed by the Supreme Soviet.

Pending the adoption of a new constitution, the Supreme Soviet should pass laws on elections to the supreme bodies of legislative and executive power by taking into account the formation of a multiparty system in Russia. In the lawmakers opinion, these laws should take effect once the constitution is adopted. Elections to the supreme bodies of legislative power and to the presidency will be held on the basis of the new constitution and these laws.

The 8th Congress of People's Deputies in March 1993 should legitimize this coordinated proposal. An explanatory note by the constitutional commission's executive secretary Oleg Rumyantsev describes the presidential plan for "a constitutional agreement" circulated at the Supreme Soviet's session as hardly acceptable.

Shumeyko: Parliament To Reject Power-Sharing Accord

OW2002134493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1323 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's First Vice-Premier Vladimir Shumeyko feels the parliamentary leaders are doing their utmost to put off the solution of the power-sharing problem. After an exchange of views between the President's and parliamentary teams Saturday, Shumeyko told an IF [INTERFAX] reporter that the Parliament would most likely reject a formal constitutional accord.

Shumeyko sees the situation as stalemate. He says, moreover, that the parliamentary team (headed by Deputy speaker Nikolay Ryabov—IF note) has not been authorized to hold the negotiations.

Since a constitutional accord is to be concluded between the President and the national legislature, the legislature was to have authorized its team to act on its behalf. So far, however, the team has been acting under the Speaker's authorization.

According to Vladimir Shumeyko, the parliamentary team opposed the conclusion of a formal power-sharing accord. It felt the constitutional conflict could be resolved through amending the national constitution.

The first vice-premier says neither the President nor the government would accept this view because, to carry out an economic reform, the executive branch must enjoy the freedom of operational movement.

Shumeyko says the Parliament will consider the idea of a constitutional accord no earlier than next Thursday. He says the lawmakers will first consider the advisability of a constitutional accord as such and define its form. Only after that, it may be expected to form a negotiating team.

If the parliament rejects the idea of a constitutional accord, the President may appeal to the Congress of People's Deputies. If the country's supreme legislative body also opposes the idea, the President will be forced to resolve the conflict between the two branches of power by way of nationwide referendum.

Supreme Soviet Adopts Law on State Border

LD1902151493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1352 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 19 Feb—The president and government of the Russian Federation are to coordinate the activities of bodies of state involved in the protection of the state border, says the law "On the State Border of the Russian Federation," which was adopted by the Russian parliament today. From now on, Russia's state border will be the same as the border of the [former] RSFSR, as enshrined in international treaties and in the laws of the former USSR on the state border of the USSR and the borders of the Union republics, which are still valid on the day that this legislation comes into force. The extent of the state border is established and altered by international treaties of the Russian Federation and by decisions of the Congress of People's Deputies. In the event of the provisions of Russian legislation and international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party proving contradictory, it is the provisions of the international treaties that are valid. A parliamentary decision on the procedure for putting into effect the law on the state border provides for stepping up talks with the governments of those states that were once Union republics and of other countries with which there are no relevant treaties in order to conclude agreements on the delimitation and demarcation of the state border of the Russian Federation and its regime.

Supreme Soviet Changes Name of National Policy Committee

LD2002085593 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0830 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] The Russian Supreme Soviet has changed the name of the Russian Federation State Committee for National Policy. From now on it will be called the State Committee for Federation and Nationalities Affairs [Goskomitet po Delam Federatsii I Natsionalnostei]. Sergey Shakhray, vice premier and chairman of the State Committee, says there will be some reorganization. In particular, it is envisaged that two new directorates will be working within the Committee—one for prevention and settlement of inter-ethnic conflicts, and the other for the regional economy.

Parliament Calls For Sanctions Against Croatia

MK1902140493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Feb 93 p 1

["R.I."- signed report: "Supreme Soviet on Yugoslavia"]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet passed a decree and an appeal on 18 February regarding the conflicts inside Yugoslavia. The decree suggests that the Russian Federation Government raise the issue of introducing sanctions against Croatia. If the UN Security Council is against this, sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be lifted without fail. The same position is worded in somewhat milder terms in the appeal. The appeal, however, is addressed to, among others, all republics of the former Yugoslavia, which, in the opinion of Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, chairman of the International Affairs Committee, amounts to de facto recognition of the Serbian Krajina in Croatia, and the Serbian Republic in Bosnia.

[Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English at 1900 GMT on 18 February adds: "The Russian parliament believes the government should propose to the United Nations Security Council the introduction of sanctions against Croatia and a moderation of sanctions against the Union Republic of Yugoslavia, with the purpose of cancelling them in the near future.

["A corresponding resolution was approved by a joint session in the two houses. It was addressed to the former republics of Yugoslavia and the world community.

["The parliament urged the world community to refrain from arms supplies to the conflict zone as well as from military interference."]

Chernomyrdin Foresees 'Common Market' With CIS States

OW1802162693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1550 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin believes Russia, in its relations with other republics of the Soviet Union, is suffering from the "elder brother" syndrome. Summing up, at Thursday's meeting of the government presidium, a discussion on Russia's economic relations with other ex-Soviet republics, he said Russia should stop canceling their debts to it. Otherwise Russia would, he thinks, be "taken apart." The ruble zone, in its present form, is detrimental to Russia, Chernomyrdin said. The ruble, he said, can nowadays efficiently be used only in transactions with Belarus and Kazakhstan. "We shall apparently have to build our relations within the CIS on 'common market' principles," he said.

"Guarding the country's national interests" should, according to the Prime Minister, be the government's main task in relations with other republics of the former Soviet Union in the period of transition to market economics.

The presidium instructed the State Committee for Economic Cooperation with CIS Member States to draft, within a week, a relevant decision, which will be published.

The presidium also approved draft statutes on federal executive bodies, including the Economics, Foreign Economic Relations, and Social Security Ministries. The drafts were presented by the government's chief of staff, Vladimir Kvasov.

[Moscow INTERFAX in English, received via KYODO, at 1550 GMT on 18 February transmits the following further report on Chernomyrdin's remarks at today's government presidium meeting:

["Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has called for the country to switch over to world prices in dealings with CIS partners, with due account taken of the ruble's differentiated clearing coefficients. He gave corresponding instructions to Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Sergey Glazyev on Thursday, during the session of the cabinet's presidium which discussed Russia's trade and economic relations with the Commonwealth states.

["Chernomyrdin said that these relations should be adjusted and that a clear-cut procedure of economic cooperation be drafted, noting that Russia lost 8 million tons of oil last year as a result of its re-export through Ukraine.

["He also pointed out that in 1993 Russian enterprises must broaden direct contacts with former Soviet republics on the condition that the latter provide them with proper state guarantees.

["At the same time, he urged the participants in the meeting to think whether Russia is interested in preserving a single economic market, or would like to organize economic relations with Commonwealth states on the basis of the EC model."]

Government Holds Emergency Session on Ruble

MK2002144693 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 20 Feb 93 p 9

[Nikolay Podlipskiy report: "Council of Ministers Presidium Session. Emergency Government Meeting Held"]

[Text] A special session of the Council of Ministers Presidium on 19 February drew the attention of experts, not so much by the fact that it was behind closed doors, but by what it might have discussed. It has become known that in advance of the session, the ministries in charge of the economy had prepared proposals for stabilizing the ruble.

According to employees of the government press center, two sessions of the Presidium held in the same number of days is rather unusual for the Russian cabinet, particularly when the 19 February extraordinary session lasted much longer than the 18 February discussion of Russia's relations with the other CIS countries.

According to unofficial sources, the discussion focused on a whole range of defense questions. The Ministries of the Economy, Finance, and Foreign Economic Relations, however, had prepared for the session, on the president's instructions, proposals for measures to stabilize the ruble. Observers point to the very significant fact that no formal instructions to do so were given to the Bank of Russia—the chief guardian of interests of the ruble. One can surmise in this connection that the position of Deputy Premier Boris Fedorov, who is the main supporter of a tough credit and financial policy, prevailed in the drawing up of measures to stabilize the national currency. Among other things, he advocates increasing the Bank of Russia's refinancing rate and limiting the issue of credits every quarter. As for possible government moves on the domestic hard-currency market, they remain unknown.

KOMMERSANT-DAILY experts do not rule out a possible decision to expand, rather than cut back, the Russian currency market. The reason for this is that limiting currency transactions while the ruble is unstable could, instead of strengthening the ruble, have the contrary effect—an uncontainable currency flight from the country, which could in turn provoke a return to the regulation of exchange rates by injunction. That would of course signify a strategic retreat from the policy of reform. Experts believe that decisions could be made, as part of the efforts to expand the currency market, to induce Russian residents to keep their foreign currency in Russian banks. In line with the proposals prepared at the Ministry of the Economy, it would be logical to let nonresidents into the Russian currency market, and also to issue currency bonds (in addition to Vneshekonombank liability bonds).

The session of the Presidium ended late at night, so KOMMERSANT- DAILY will report its results in its next issue on 23 February.

Shakhray Addresses Supreme Soviet on Caucasus Trip

LD1902234393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1905 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Address by Russian Vice Prime Minister Sergey Shakhray at the Supreme Soviet in Moscow on 19 February—recorded; from the "At the Russian Supreme Soviet Session" program]

[Text] Esteemed deputies! Naturally, I will only tell you about yesterday's trip because I do not represent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and I don't think various departments should be lumped together on the same subject. Yesterday's trip, moreover, was a joint trip with the chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities and the beginning of this trip was planned by inter-parliamentary contacts. By the way, the signed communique stressed the need to extend inter-parliamentary contacts. I think this is extremely necessary in view of the fact that sooner or later the Russian parliament as well as the parliament of the Republic of Georgia will have to ratify the Russian-Georgian treaty.

Unfortunately, contacts and talks demonstrated a high degree of anti-Russian moods in the society there and, to a certain degree, anti-Georgian moods here, especially in North Caucasus. This is an alarming symptom. And I think one of the tasks of trips like the one yesterday was using regular contacts to resolve claims. We could see for ourselves that one could spend hours expounding reciprocal accusations regarding the same helicopters and the same events. The accumulated amount of documents and accusations can be discussed for months. What did we discuss during our working—I would like to stress, working—visit? There were three main issues: The problem of refugees' returning to places of permanent residence; the problem of resolving the Abkhaz conflict and in this connection the general context of relations between Russia and Georgia; and third, the situation in North Caucasus.

Regional Affairs

St. Peterburg Mayor Calls For Provisional Constitution

OW2002175693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1716 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In a televised appearance Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak of St. Petersburg said the present political situation made it impossible for Russia to adopt a constitution that would work for decades, if not centuries. Sobchak felt a provisional constitution could adopted to serve Russia two or three years, until it had a new legislature and chief executive. [sentence as received] In Sobchak's view, the incessant confrontation between Russia's executive and legislative branches discredited and weakened all the bodies of national power. The Petersburg Mayor saw hyperinflation and national disintegration as the main threats that confronted Russia.

Anatoliy Sobchak said the decision, by the congress of people's deputies, to call a nationwide referendum must be complied with. But he voiced incredulity about the attempt, by the parliament's collective presidency, to act instead of the parliament. The Petersburg Mayor felt that by wording the referendum's questions, the parliament's presidency attempted to play for time and make a normal referendum impossible.

If the confrontation between the top echelons of the country's legislative and executive branches continued, the republics of the Russian Federation could find a solution formula whose provisions would be binding on all the power structures.

St. Petersburg Center To Dismantle Tanks, Produce Tractors

PM1902140893 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 18 Feb 93

["Novosti" newscast video report from St. Petersburg by Vladimir Batalov]

[Text] [Batalov to camera, in front of row of tanks in the snow] One of the oldest plants is seeing its defense function gradually become a thing of the past. Tanks have been repaired here for several decades, from the legendary "34" to the present day. Now the plant has been turned into the first Russian center for scrapping combat vehicles.

Under the international treaty—it has been signed by over 20 countries—some 30 tanks are to be scrapped in the European part of Russia.

The first 60 combat vehicles scheduled for destruction were shown to foreign observers from Britain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France. The T-55 and T-62 tanks scheduled for destruction are scandalously obsolete but nevertheless before the blow torch touched the metal the engines and optical instruments were dismantled and the caterpillar tracks were removed—they will find a use in the national economy.

At the very old armored vehicle and tank plant, repair of present-day combat vehicles will continue as before and alongside them the defense industry workers are to produce caterpillar tractors, skidding tractors, and power units. They have to make a living, after all.

Deputies Propose Special Congress in March

OW1902162993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1411 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An extraordinary congress of the RF [Russian Federation] people's deputies has to be convened in March, 1993, in order that its deputies may assess the situation and find ways out of the ongoing crisis, reads the statement which was adopted by the heads of Russia's representative branch who are taking part in the All-Russian Conference in Novosibirsk.

The proposed referendum would produce no results under the conditions of a catastrophic decline in production, growing unemployment, soaring inflation and the impoverishment of the majority of the Russian population, the statement continues. "Given all that, the unpredictable outcome of the referendum is likely to further aggravate the constitutional crisis in Russia."

The participants of the meeting in Novosibirsk propose that 1993 become the year of stabilizing the country's socio-economic situation, when all branches of power focus their attention on economic reforms. They also propose that the existing Constitution be amended, so that the Constitutional Court would have the authority to relieve of their duties those officials who have violated the articles of the Constitution.

We are confident, the statement reads, that the proposed variants of the power sharing agreements among the federal legislative and executive branches are ultimately unacceptable, for they contradict some of essential provisions of the existing Constitution and the Federative Agreement.

Karelia's Supreme Soviet Votes Against Referendum

LD1902175093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1636 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Zlobin]

[Text] Petrozavodsk February 19 TASS—At a session of the Supreme Soviet of Karelia it has been decided that it is inexpedient to hold a referendum on the main statutes of the constitution of the Russian Federation.

An opinion poll conducted in the provinces showed that a considerable part of the population, with the right to vote, does not wish to take part in the referendum, because carrying out this action will put under threat the integrity of the state, the resolution said.

During the session it was decided that a proposal should be made to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation to call an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies with the referendum on its agenda. Karelian parliamentarians proposed to impose a moratorium on referendums and elections on the entire territory during 1993.

The important outcome of the Supreme Soviet of Karelia's first session, ending today, was the adoption of the Mineral Wealth Act. The document in a clear-cut manner demarcates the competency of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Karelia in the sphere of the use of mineral wealth.

Russia has been entrusted the task of working out the fundamentals of the Mineral Wealth Act and the strategy for using resources which are in federal possession. As for the mineral wealth of the republic and its use, it will be under the jurisdiction of Karelia, including the right to conclude international agreements on these questions.

The second stage of the session, at which economic issues will be discussed, is planned to be held in March, after the Russian parliament adopts the 1993 budget.

Yakut Republic, Irkutsk Oblast Sign Economic Agreement

LD2202112193 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0800 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] The Yakut Republic and Irkutsk Oblast have signed an agreement on economic cooperation for the coming year. One of the attached protocols provides for the further joint use of the Lena United River Shipping Line. Another envisages the reciprocal delivery of goods and articles. In particular, the Yakut Republic will deliver to Irkutsk Oblast 1 billion rubles in precious metals, fish, furs, and meat, and will receive in return petrol and diesel fuel and products of the chemical, petrochemical, timber, wood- working, light, and food industries.

International Affairs

IRA Said To Open Kiev Office, Threatens British Embassy

LD2002125893 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] A branch of the Irish Republican Army [IRA] has appeared in Kiev: the Belfast-Kiev Fraternity. Reporting the creation of this illegal Catholic terrorist organization, the newspaper KIEVSKIYE VEDEMOSTI writes that the fraternity has already issued pamphlets expressing hate toward Protestants and the English, and has called the militia, warning that it will blow up the British Embassy in Kiev. According to the newspaper, Ukraine's security services told its correspondent that they do not have any official information about these threatening phone calls. The British Embassy has made no comment.

Talks Held With Romania, Bulgaria on Yugoslavia

LD2002100293 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Ukraine has had constructive consultations in Bucharest with Romania and Bulgaria on implementing UN sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. The sides stressed that the application of such a regime against the former Yugoslavia will contribute to the speediest settlement of the crisis in this region. The talks participants expressed their resolve to strictly adhere to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The speech of the Ukrainian delegation stressed that adhering to this decision unconditionally should not be regarded as a hostile position regarding Serbia, but that it is one of the ways of resolving the conflict situation in the former Yugoslavia by political means.

Foreign Ministry Criticizes Russia Over Sevastopol

LD1902195893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1800 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet provisional working commission on the status of the city of Sevastopol set up in accordance with the decision of the Seventh Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies has distributed a questionnaire in the Crimea on the status of Sevastopol and the Crimea as a whole. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has sent Russia and other CIS states a note in this connection giving an exhaustive legal analysis of this action, which is in reality aimed at making territorial claims on Ukraine. The actions of the Russian side are qualified as a violation of accepted principles of international law, in particular, territorial integrity and inviolability of state borders. It also points out that Russia is neglecting its obligations under the UN Charter, CSCE and CIS documents, and bilateral Ukrainian-Russian agreements.

Russia 'Violating' International Law

OW1902212693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1930 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Ukrainian foreign ministry has accused the Russian parliamentary commission on the status of Sevastopol of violating the principles of international law.

The statement circulated by the press center of the Ukrainian MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] reproaches the Russian parliamentary commission for circulating among Crimean deputies a letter which presents their attitude toward the status of Sevastopol and Crimea as a whole.

The Ukrainian MFA is qualifying this action as an infringement on Ukraine territorial integrity, breach of inviolability of its borders, and ignorance by Russia of its international commitments.

Vice Prime Minister on Demand for Oil, Oil Treaties

WS1902144093 Kiev KYYIVSKA PRAVDA in Ukrainian 9 Feb 93 p 1

[Interview with Vice Prime Minister Yuliy Ioffe by H. Pyvovarov: "Situation With Oil Tense, But I Hope for the Best"]

[Text] [Pyvovarov] Our main concern today is the situation with fuel resources. Thus, my first question is: How does it look this year?

[Ioffe] The demand for coal and natural gas will be fully met. There will be a sufficient supply of these materials and of industrial fuel oil for all of our 47 thermal power plants.

The situation with crude oil is a little different. To tell the truth it has not been quite solved yet. We have intergovernment agreements with Russia for the shipment of 20 million tonnes of oil. In January we received 2.4 million tonnes, and we think that Ukrainian oilers in Tyumen Oblast will produce a couple of million tonnes. Preparations for the reopening of the temporarily closed oil wells are due to start soon. Last year, we produced 4 million tonnes of oil at the Ukrainian wells. Of course, this is not enough. In peak periods we managed to produce as much as 12 million tonnes. In recent years, rich deposits of oil have been discovered in Ukraine. The economic advantage of their exploitation is evident. Today the question is how to "take" this oil sooner and better.

[Pyvovarov] By the way, what is our yearly demand for oil?

[Ioffe] To live a more or less quiet life—about 40 million tonnes.

[Pyvovarov] Who can guarantee that Russia will not revise the agreements and put prices up, as occurred last year?

[Ioffe] So far there are no grounds to think so. We hope that last year's situation will not reoccur. Although I would prefer such important issues to be solved at the highest level, as was done with Turkmenistan. During our president's visit to the Republic, the top officials of the two countries discussed the problem, and later appropriate government institutions worked on it and signed a treaty on gas shipments to Ukraine. We will be paying in coupon-karbovanetses. This treaty is mutually advantageous and each side will gain from it. Building our relations with Russia on the same grounds would be the best solution.

[Pyvovarov] Do we count on Russia alone or are there other sources for obtaining fuel resources, oil among them?

[Ioffe] Of course we are not oriented towards Russia alone. Our negotiations with different countries are now at different stages. They are more advanced with Bulgaria. It possesses sufficient oil refining powers, and we will gain from trading with it. We can give Bulgaria electric power. Our relations with Oman and a number of other petroleum producing countries are in the planning stage. We are also holding direct negotiations with Tatarstan and Kazakhstan.

[Pyvovarov] Some people express concern about the coming sowing campaign—will we have enough fuel for it?

[Ioffe] We need 200,000 tonnes of gasoline and 400,000 tonnes of diesel fuel for the campaign. We have been building up the necessary supply; a half of it has been stored. The Security Service has been ordered to supervise this process to avoid wasting the fuel.

[Pyvovarov] But the task is not only to sow, but to gather the crops as well. Looking ahead, where shall we take fuel for harvesting?

[Ioffe] Let us take care of sowing first. Fuel for harvesting will be stored in the same way—beforehand.

National Affairs

Baltin Says Conflicts Between Armed Forces Inadmissible

LD2202101393 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] An assembly devoted to the Defenders of Fatherland Day has taken place in Sevastopol. Speaking at the assembly, Black Sea Fleet Commander Eduard Baltin called on those present not to give in to political emotions, and stated the inadmissibility of conflicts between representatives of various Armed Forces. Mykola Kostrov, first deputy commander in chief of the Ukrainian naval forces, noted in his speech that Ukrainian sailors will be brought up on the feats and fighting traditions of sailors of the Black Sea Fleet.

Government Cuts Defense Industry by Nearly Two-Thirds

OW2002162893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1416 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In 1992, Ukraine's defense industry cut down its output by 65 percent by comparison to that of 1991, its share in the republic's total production going down from 23 to eight percent.

The Minister of the Military Industrial Complex and Defense Conversion, Viktor Antonov, told the Ukrainian press his ministry would have to sign more than 5000 agreements to carry out conversion programs.

Antonov thinks the defense industry should have a special bank for conversion and reconstruction with possible investments of foreign capital.

Sevastopol, Simferopol Rallies Demand USSR Revival

LD2102183693 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] About 6,000 people attended a rally in Sevastopol today. The initiators included the Russian Movement of Sevastopol [Russkoye Dvizheniye Sevastopolya]; the Society of Russian Culture named after Pushkin [Tovarystvo Russkaya Kultura Imeni Pushkina]; the Russian Patriotic Meeting [Rossiyskoye Patrioticheskoye Sobraniye]; and the Sevastopol orgnization of the Republican Movement of the Crimea.

Participants in the rally made demands with regard to the revival of the former USSR. In their opinion Sevastopol should become the initiator for this matter. They expressed themselves in support of a unified Black Sea Fleet and for the liquidation of the Fleet's Ukrainian structures in Sevastopol.

The rally also voiced demands for a ban on the holding of a congress of Ukrainians of Sevastopol planned for 28 February. The idea of holding an all-Crimean referendum relating to Crimea's transfer to the jurisdiction of Russia was supported instead.

Following the end of the rally, the participants crossed the town, halting trolleybuses for about 30 minutes. An identical rally was held by adherents of the revival of the communist empire in Simferopol, capital of the Republic of Crimea.

Crimea To Open Mission at Ukrainian Government

LD2202120793 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] RUKH-PRESS has reported that the Council of Ministers of Crimea has approved a decision on organizing a mission of the Government of Crimea at the Government of Ukraine. This is one of the steps in implementing the law on the division of authorities between the Republic of Crimea and Ukraine.

Kiev Transport Strike Continues; Court Case Possible

LD1902142993 Kiev UKRINFORM in Russian 1743 GMT 18 Feb 93

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Alla Moyseyeva]

[Excerpts] Kiev, 18 Feb—The drivers of the city's trolleybuses and trams did not start work today either, having announced an indefinite strike. [passage omitted] But bus drivers, taking pity on passengers, who are quite innocent and who have had to make their way to work or to the nearest metro station on foot in the freezing cold for three days now, took their vehicles out, and were described by their colleagues as strike-breakers. Around 400 departmental buses have already started transporting the city's population. From 0600 to 0900 in the morning and from 1500 to 2000 in the evening, they travel between the hottest spots [passage omitted] Of course, it is not easy to cover all of the routes, and therefore the vehicles are crowded. [passage omitted]

The Kiev city state authorities have stated that they cannot sit down at the negotiating table with the rebels, as there is no end to their demands. But transport department staff members are keeping in contact with the strikers: they are explaining the consequences of the illegal action, and appealing to the commonsense of the strikers, quite a number of whom are women. It is not only the public who are all hostages in this extraordinary situation, but also the strikers' families. [passage omitted]

The actions of the strikers have been described as illegal. For the moment, it is difficult to put a figure on the economic losses the city has suffered, but those responsible will be taken to court. Thus, funds planned for the social development of electric transport employees' collectives may not reach the addressees.

On the instructions of the president's representative in Kiev, a commission has been set up to eliminate the negative consequences of the electric transport employees' strike, to stabilize the situation, and to ensure that the population is provided with transport. Commitments made earlier to the collectives and trade union committees of transport enterprises by the city executive committee and the state administration have been declared invalid because of the strikers' gross violations of operative legislation and the economic losses they have caused the city by failing to provide transport to the population. Directors of tram and trolleybus depots must urgently go to court to seek recognition that it is illegal for transport enterprises to stop work.

Should the strike continue, it will be necessary to appeal to the Ukrainian president and Cabinet of Ministers to temporarily deploy military units and their transport to ensure that the city can function.

This is now the fourth strike by the city's transport employees, and the position adopted by the Kiev Council, which is still studying the situation, is surprising. At an open session, deputies again talked this issue into the ground, unnecessarily showing again their helplessness in an extreme situation.

Communist Revival Blamed for Parliamentary Crisis

OW1902190693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The current parliamentary crisis over the election of the Constitutional Court was caused by the fact that the majority of deputies would like to revive the Ukrainian Communist party, Aleksandr Yemets, the Ukrainian president's political and legal adviser, told Ukrainian radio and TV reporters on Thursday [19 February].

"The parliamentary minority fears lest following the restoration of the communist party, the parliament might pass over to the restoration of the totalitarian regime, given the growing left-wing radical moods," said Yemets. "In view of this, it has to use the subtleties of the procedure and the imperfect rules regulating the work of the parliament in such a way as not to allow the majority to impose its will on it."

Yemets shares the opposition leaders' fears lest the Constitutional Court might become a party body uniting communists instead of being the supreme judicial body.

Aleksandr Yemets suggested in this connection that the Constitutional Court be elected by two thirds of the votes, not by a simple majority as envisaged in the law. If this variant is accepted, the majority and minority will have to seek a compromise.

He also expressed concern about the fact that three out of the four candidates proposed by the Ukrainian president, had been rejected. The socialist tendency in parliament goes together with anti-presidential moods, because orthodox-minded ex-party leaders keep grudges against Kravchuk for his ability to adjust his ways to the changing reality.

Speaking about relationships between the president, parliament and the cabinet, Aleksandr Yemets noted that the president supported the government and did not fetter its initiatives. However, many of the deputies resent individual ministers and are pushing the government towards populist decisions, he added. To quote Yemets, the discussion of the law on the cabinet suggests that most of the deputies would like to limit the president's influence on the executive branch. He also said that the government could be independent only if it were accountable to both the president and parliament, on the condition that presidential control be stronger than parliamentary.

Anti-Communist Front Forum Opens in Kiev

LD2102174993 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] The All-Ukrainian Forum of the Anti-Communist and Anti- Imperialist Front began its work in Kiev today. Representatives of almost 30 parties and civil movements are taking part. Volodymyr Yavorivskyy is chairing the forum.

The participants honored the memory of Ukrainian poet Vasyl Stus. The poet Mykola Rudenko, a former political prisoner, was given the first word. He appealed to the democratic forces of Ukraine for unity in the struggle against the revival of the empire and communism.

In his speech Mykhaylo Horyn, leader of the Ukrainian Republic Party, stated that the creation of the Anti-Imperialist and Anti-Communist Front represents a union of practically all state forces under the roof of the Ukrainian idea. He outlined his ideas on the directions for further joint work of the democratic forces. In particular, these are the pre-term suspension of authorities of the Supreme Council and of councils of all levels, the holding of a public process with the aim of uncovering crimes of the CPSU and the Communist Party of the Ukraine against the people of our state, withdrawal from the CIS, and a suspension of the unilateral disarmament of Ukraine.

Representatives of the Association of Ukrainian Lawyers and of the Christian Democratic Party of Ukraine are present at the forum as observers.

Examines Crimes Against Ukrainians

LD2202095593 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] The All-Ukrainian Forum of the Anti-Communist Anti-Imperialist Front took place in Kiev on 21 February. Representatives of nearly 30 political parties, civic organizations and movements of our state took part in it. They heard speeches from their leaders regarding the historical, social, and national principles of the creation of the Front, and also on issues of anti- imperialist strategy, economic transformations, and the development of statehood and human rights. An act of accusations against the imperialist and communist system of crimes against the Ukrainian people was read out. Participants of the forum also adopted a corresponding declaration. It states the joint actions of political parties and civic organizations, directed especially at the pre-term suspension of authorities of the Supreme Council and councils of all levels, the non-admission of a review of the resolution on the prohibition of the activity of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and active contribution to the establishment of structures of state authority in our republic.

Cabinet Decrees Envision Formation of Hard-Currency Market

MK2002115693 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 19 Feb 93 p 5

[Viktor Zubanyuk, Yuriy Kalashnov report: "New Ukrainian Law on Currency Regulation. Currency Operations Center Could Move to Ukraine]

[Excerpts] On 18 February, the Ukrainian cabinet passed decrees on a system of foreign currency control and foreign currency regulation, and on procedures for making payments in foreign currency inside the Republic. Observers believe that the provisions contained in these documents will eventually help form a Ukrainian currency market and create the conditions whereby the center of speculative currency transactions in the Baltics may shift to Ukraine.

Observers think that the new Ukrainian government decrees, if ratified by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, will create the possibility for Russian commercial organizations to expand the geographical area of their speculation in hard and soft currencies, and shift their center of operation from the Baltic countries to Ukraine. Among other things, the decrees provide for the Ukrainian karbovanets to become fully convertible inside Ukraine against the principal foreign currencies, including the Russian ruble, around the middle of the year. It is planned to provide the republic's domestic market with an adequate sum of hard currency by introducing mandatory sales at the Ukrainian Currency Exchange of 50 percent of hard currency earnings, and by liberalizing the currency legislation. [passage omitted]

Experience in the Baltic states shows that in order to achieve internal convertibility, there has to be a cap on the issue of credits, and a transition to payments in hard currency and Russian rubles. Observers therefore predict that, given free access to hard currency by Ukrainian commercial banks and their Russian clients—something the decrees provide for—buying dollars on the Russian hard-currency market and subsequently selling them in Ukraine, or vice versa, will become very popular (in Estonia the profit on such operations this week reached 10 to 15 percent of the sum invested).

The new decrees also make provision for individuals to be granted the right to open currency exchange outlets. It is therefore predicted that Russian commercial firmsthat cannot obtain licenses to carry out currency operations in Russia and that at the moment operate mainly in Latvia will look toward the Ukrainian currency market.

Belarus

Shushkevich Reiterates Goal To Remove All Nuclear Arms

OW1902175893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1705 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Speaking yesterday over national TV, the speaker of Belarusian parliament Stanislav Shushkevich reiterated his intention to seek the complete removal of nuclear arms from the republic. "No one is frightened by nuclear power any more. Civilized society does not need it," said the speaker. He said the Belarusian leadership's position was met with "understanding and support by the world community." He denied accusations of his involvement in the collapse of the Soviet Union. He believes "the Soviet Union was broken by its former leaders and it was impossible to support its ruins." The speaker said it would be better to live in the CIS than in the USSR.

Speaking about the introduction of a national monetary unit in Belarus, Shushkevich stressed that as a sovereign state, Belarus has a full right to do so. He believes the national currency may be introduced when the production slump stops and there are signs of economic growth. According to Shushkevich, signs do exist and Belarus is capable of introducing its own currency. At the same time, the speaker believes, if the republic signs a treaty with Russia on saving the ruble as the only currency, "this would be as good for Belarus."

The Belarusian leader spoke in favor of balancing state and private ownership of land and against breaking up collective and state farms through resolutions. The speaker said that a relevant law should be considered at the next session of parliament.

Stanislav Shushkevich does not think that people's deputies should work in the executive branch. He believes they should no longer combine two jobs in the future. The Belarusian leader described as nonsense the fact that the republican military cadet school retains the name of Aleksandr Suvorov, a Russian military leader of the 18th century. Shushkevich said that for him, Suvorov is like Napoleon or Guderian (a general of the German Wehrmacht who took part in military operations on Soviet territory in 1941-1943). Those were skilful military leaders, but they don't deserve respect as human beings because they caused much suffering to the Belarusian people, believes Stanislav Shushkevich. The possible change of name for the Suvorov cadet school in Minsk will not mean its closure.

Asked by a TV viewer about the position of Russian-speakers in Belarus, Shushkevich said that there are no forces in the republic that are creating unfavorable conditions for the normal life of people of this nationality.

Moldova

Defense Cooperation Agreement Signed With Ukraine

LD1902155693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1510 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By MOLDOVA-PRES for TASS]

[Text] Chisinau, 19 Feb—In Chisinau today, Pavel Creange and Konstyantyn Morozov, defense ministers of Moldova and Ukraine respectively, signed an agreement on cooperation between the military departments of the two neighboring states. The document stipulates the establishment of business contacts, the sharing of experience in the creation of national armies, joint participation in military exercises, cooperation in tactical studies and the training of specialists, and the development of a common antiaircraft system.

Ukraine To Maintain Neutrality

LD1902200593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1751 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Chisinau February 19 TASS—Ukraine will be neutral in case of armed conflicts on Moldovan territory, visiting Ukrainian Defence Minister Colonel-General Konstyantyn Morozov told a news conference here today.

The general believes the issue of the Russian 14th Army on Moldovan territory must be settled at governmental negotiations between the two countries. In his words, Ukraine is neutral in this respect.

The agreement signed during the visit envisages cooperation in personnel training, servicing of arms and exchange of experience in building national armed forces.

Both countries' armies intend to hold joint military exercises, create joint air defence and coordinate actions on fulfilment of the Treaty on Conventional Arms in Europe.

Arms exchange is possible between Ukraine and Moldova.

Mass media has reported Moldova is interested in purchasing advanced armored materiel and combat helicopters in exchange to its fighters and tactical missiles, which the small Army, the republic is building, does not need.

Chairman Lucinschi: Dniester Compromises Possible

LD2002224193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1345 GMT 20 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Chisinau 20 Feb—Moldovan Parliament Chairman Petru Lucinschi said that despite the time which had been lost, the problem of the Dniester region could be resolved. In an interview published today in RESPUBLIKA he stresses that for this to happen one must move from seeking people to blame to seeking points to bring the sides closer together. According to him, Moldova is ready for serious compromises; however, at the same time the Dniester region must renounce personal ambitions and the idea of building its own state.

Lucinschi denied allegations that he intends to encroach upon the power of President Mircea Snegur. He said that the statement by his predecessor, ex-speaker Alexandru Mosanu, who resigned, to the effect that "with Lucinschi's advent to power Snegur could pack his presidential bags" was a joke. Lucinschi came out strongly in favor of ending the confrontation between legislative and executive power in Moldova and expressed confidence that he would find a common language with President Mircea Snegur, Prime Minister Sangeli, and other leaders. Lucinschi thinks the Moldovan parliament must overcome the discord between the factions and set about resolving the political and economic problems which have come to a head. Otherwise the parliamentary crisis will deepen and people will lose confidence in its ability to operate.

Commenting on Moldova's participation in the CIS, Lucinschi noted that he remains a follower of the construction of an economic bloc of states which jointly will overcome the crisis gripping them. He stressed at the same time that the opponents of the Commonwealth in Moldova "are deliberately confusing Russia with the CIS."

Dniester Organizations Protest 14th Army Drills

AU2102140993 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1332 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 21/2/1993—The democratic movements, public organizations, and all people of good will not indifferent to the fate of the population in the eastern rayons of the Republic of Moldova, are addressing a firm protest to the leadership of the Russian Federation regarding recent provocations on the territory of the Republic of Moldova: Applications of the 14th [CIS] Army together with Smirnovist paratroops, shows a document released to the MOLDOVA-PRES agency by the leadership of the Transdniestria Society, by the Combat Movement and the Committee for the Defense of Victims of Separatism in Moldova, by the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Tiraspol, and the Students' League in the Dniester region.

We consider that military applications of foreign troops on the territory of sovereign Moldova, without the latter's consent, are running counter to international law, reads the document. We are requesting from Boris Yeltsin and from Russian Parliament to decide on an unconditional and without delay withdrawal of the 14th Army from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, given the fact that this army is representing a major de-stabilizing factor in Moldova, the document says.

Romanian: 'Only' Official Language in Moldova

AU1902183493 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1541 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Chisinau ROMPRES, 19/2/1993—In the Republic of Moldova only one language is official: Romanian, said Mihai Coscodan, chairman of the Language Committee, Moldova's deputy prime minister, in an interview for Radio Chisinau, quoted by Bucharest daily MERIDIAN.

Both the committee I am in charge of and the State Department for Languages, he specified, are supposed to contribute to the enforcement of the law on the official language. The law, among other things, stipulates the certification of all employees on 1 January 1994.

By that time the committee has to undertake various measures to help those who do not know the Romanian language.

Moldova's Parliament adopted on 31 August 1989 the law on the instatement of the Romanian language of as official language and the return to the Latin alphabet. Also then a resolution was made that within five years all Moldova's citizens, primarily those holding managerial positions and public servants, should learn Romanian.

Report Views Economic, Political Tensions

LD2202152393 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Report by Mikhail Sokirke; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Although events in Moldova are usually seen in a political context, problems are moving increasingly on to the economic plane. Yet again, prices for the basic foodstuffs of pensioners—namely milk and dairy products—have shot up. Even in Kishinev, passenger transportation is not functioning on many routes because of a shortage of fuel. Communications have been disrupted between rural settlements and rayon centers. Many people have not received their wages for a long time. All this does little to bring calm to the political horizon.

Although parliament has come out positively on this issue, there is still a very stormy debate going on about the president's statement on the need for a referendum on Moldova's status as a state. The resignation of four parliamentary leaders did, to a certain degree, affect the destabilization of the situation. People are concerned by Mircea Snegur's warning of 12 February that the republic could expect a coup d'etat. Therefore, despite today's apparently calm situation, ambiguous problems constantly keep people on edge.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev on Observing START I, Clinton Letter

OW1902181593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1706 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev has proposed holding a conference on confidence building measures in Asia that would contribute to political and economic stability in the Central Asian region. Russia, China, India, and Central Asian countries could attend the conference. The head of state made this statement at a news conference in Alma-Ata on Thursday [18 Feb] when he told journalists of his European and Middle East tour. He said that a group of Foreign Ministry experts had been negotiating the convening of such a conference with interested countries.

The president also emphasized that the conference was not designed to be an alternative to the CSCE. Ideally, the Asian conference and CSCE will cooperate.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: Originally, Nazarbayev proposed holding a representative international forum on cooperation and confidence building measures in Asia at the 47th session of the UN General Assembly.

Nazarbayev confirmed Kazakhstan's commitment to START 1 and the Lisbon Protocol. He emphasized that his country needed absolute security guarantees in the case of the threat of war as well as financial and technical U.S. aid in dismantling and eliminating nuclear weapons.

IF Note: This issue was also discussed at President Nazarbayev's meeting with William Courtney, U.S. Ambassador in Alma-Ata. The ambassador handed the Kazakh leader a personal message from Bill Clinton. The U.S. President is highly appreciative of bilateral economic and cultural relations and expressed the hope that Kazakhstan would continue the policy of eliminating nuclear weapons.

Kazakhstan's president thinks that the reduction and elimination of nuclear missiles in his country must be contingent on the funds allotted by the U.S. for this purpose. (The Senator Lugar Foundation was set up in the U.S. which will channel $800 Mn [million] to CIS member nations to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons - IF). Nazarbayev said that it was not known what amount was earmarked for Kazakhstan.

President Nazarbayev also wanted expensive nuclear fuel in missiles to be put to peaceful uses in the national economy and missiles now in silos, to be used to boost nonmilitary satellites for commercial purposes.

Nazarbayev said that he would send a message on these matters shortly to the American president.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Kuchma Arrives for Talks

LD2102155893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1536 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By UKRINFORM special correspondent Anatoliy Grigoryev for TASS]

[Text] Alma-Ata February 21 TASS—A Ukrainian governmental delegation led by Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma arrived in Kazakhstan on Sunday [21 February].

The delegation which is touring Central Asian countries has already visited Uzbekistan.

At the airport, Kuchma said Ukraine counts on cooperation with Kazakhstan. "He who hopes to survive alone is doomed," Kuchma said. He expressed the hope that his talks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Prime Minister Sergey Tereshchenko scheduled for Monday will be successful.

The two sides are expected to sign a package of bilateral agreements, including on Ukraine's participation in the development of Kazakhstan's oil and gas industry in 1993-2005 and on the principles of space cooperation.

Tajikistan

Government Troops Launch Attack in Ramit Gorge

OW1902174793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1643 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tajik troops launched a new offensive against opposition units in the Ramit Gorge on Friday [19 February], Dushanbe-based military sources have reported to IF [INTERFAX]. These sources link the stepped up military activity to the start of fair weather for air flights since in mountain conditions air force support is essential. Tajikistan's Defense Minister Aleksandr Shishlyannikov is in charge of the operation.

By the start of the attack at 2 am, motorized infantry units had taken up their positions. The operation began at 9 am local time.

Tajik military experts say the operation will last two days and will be victorious for the government forces. The military claim that there are no more than 200 gunmen in Ramit. The government troops outnumber them five times and have an overwhelming superiority in weaponry.

Heaviest battles are reported at the confluence of the Ob, Es, and Kofarnikhon rivers 60 kilometers from Dushanbe.

Rayons 'Liberated' From Opposition

LD2202124493 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] In accordance with a report by the Tajikistan Council of Ministers, the Tavildara, Komsomolabad, Garm, and Tajikabad rayons and the Ramit Gorge, Kafarnihon rayon, have been liberated from the antigovernment forces. On 21 February, 60 tonnes of food aid arrived in Tavildara rayon. Recently foodstuffs have also been sent to other rayons of the Karatigin valley.

We believe that the people of these rayons are supporting peace and tranquillity and will be able to organize life in their regions in a peaceful and model manner. The armed men who are still hoping for the return of their lost government will be crushed, and the people of our country will condemn them for the unmanly behavior.

Rakhmonov Issues Appeal; Rejects Fundamentalism

LD2102152793 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 0100 GMT 21 Feb 93

["Appeal by Imamali Rakhmonov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan, to the Residents of Garmskiy, Komsomolobadskiy, Tajikabadskiy, (name indistinct) and (name indistinct) Rayons"]

[Text] Esteemed Fellow Countrymen! Respected fathers and mothers! Brothers and Sisters! I appeal to you today, during such (?important) times for all of us. All of you know that the current leadership of the country began work, not according to the wishes of a single individual or a group of people, but in line with the majority of the people of our suffering land. The 16th Session of the Supreme Soviet elected the legislative organs. As of today, approximately three months have elapsed since the legislative branch began its work. This time period is very small in history, but a great deal has already been done.

The most important thing is that the decision of the session and the work of the leadership of the republic is supported by the absolute majority of the population in the country and (?beyond its borders). Our aim is to serve the people and the country. Not even a single leader of the republic has another goal. Our goal is to establish a law-based democratic and secular state. This is the wish of the majority in the republic. This is our path, and we will never turn away from this path.

Unfortunately, in Garmskiy, Komsomolobadskiy, Tajikabadskiy, [name indistinct] Rayons and [words indistinct] of Koparnikhonskiy Rayon, there still are a few military formations who are refusing to implement the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet on submitting weapons, who are led by a feeling of [word indistinct] and are still under the illusion of regaining power that has been irretrievably lost.

The criminal formations know that their ranks are [word indistinct] with every passing day. They are continuing, however, to [word indistinct] with God, provoking the people, and making the people believe that the leaders of the country are trying to turn people away from [word indistinct] Islam. Tajiks have never been against Islam, and the leadership of the republic does not have such aims. Not a single leadership, no matter how strong it is, can take away from [words indistinct] and those feelings and belief.

The Tajik people are genuine Muslims, but they categorically reject Islamic fundamentalism because every Tajik family in the last few months has experienced the fruits of this fundamentalism. The people witnessed with their own eyes how the fundamentalists killed and destroyed. The people wholeheartedly rejected Islamic fundamentalism because of this.

I—as leader of the state and bearing the responsibility for the destiny of my people and my country on the basis of the wishes and the many requests of the people, deputies at all levels, and of all your children working in leading posts—agreed to send government forces to Garmskiy, Komsomolabadskiy, Tajikabadskiy and [name indistinct] Rayons and [words indistinct] for the speedy stabilization of the sociopolitical situation in the country and to put an end to the tyranny and plunder.

I would like to announce to all the people of Tajikistan that these rayons have already been liberated. Tomorrow, 60 tonnes of food products, free of charge, will be sent to [name indistinct] Rayon. I would like to emphasize once again that the government sent the forces only to (?stop) the plunderers and to secure the tranquillity of the people. I assure you that a series of other rayons will be liberated from [words indistinct] guests in the near future, and conditions will be created for supplying the people with provisions.

I would like to assure you that you can continue to live peacefully. I would like to promise that not a single innocent person will suffer. I would like to request one thing: Do not remain indifferent, but help the government forces in the work for the most speedy stabilization of the situation and contribute toward the establishment of legal local powers. Localism is alien to the leadership of the republic. All the regions carry the same weight and rights. Tajikistan is our homeland. We will never divide it, and we will not allow anyone to do this.

Government Troops in Control of Tavildara Rayon

LD1802141793 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] According to reliable sources, government forces have entered the Tavildara Rayon via the Khovaling route and have taken control of the situation in the region. Four members of the government forces were killed during the operations.

It should be noted that deceived armed men (?fleeing) the government forces took refuge in the area and were causing trouble there. They are now in a tragic state and are ready to lay down their arms. However, their leaders, still pursuing their filthy objectives, are preventing them from carrying out this good will gesture. We hope that the armed men will come to their senses and refrain from shedding the blood of their brethren.

Armed Border Clashes With Afghanistan Continue

LD2002125693 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1200 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] An armed clash has taken place on the Tajik-Afghan border. Two of the border violaters were wounded and six were detained. A correspondent of the Tajik KHOVAR agency learned this today in the headquarters of the Russian border troops in Tajikistan. In the Ishkashimskiy border unit's area, which is in the Pamirs, Russian border troop squads were fired on twice from adjacent Afghan territory with automatic weapons. Fortunately, none of the border troops were injured.

Russian Border Guards Threaten 'Appropriate Action'

PM1802131793 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 18 Feb 93 p 1

[Aleksandr Zotov report: "Russian Officer Killed in Tajikistan. Trouble on the Border. Command of Russian Border Guard Group in Tajikistan Expresses Concern at Alarming Situation Prevailing All Along Tajik-Afghan Border"]

[Text] Not only has there been an increase in violations of the Tajik state border of late, but border details have also come under fire when performing their official duties. This January population centers in the Pyandzhskiy, Kumsangirskiy, and Ishkashimskiy Border Rayons of Tajikistan were bombarded with rocket projectiles from Afghan territory. Nor are these provocative actions showing any signs of coming to an end today. Thus, a few days ago three rocket projectiles were once again fired at Pyandzhskiy Rayon, one of which exploded at a border detachment's base and another in an apartment block.

In this connection the command of the Russian Federation border troop group in Tajikistan has said that, if there is further bombardment of Tajik territory by armed groups on Afghan territory, the border guards reserve the right to take appropriate action.

The Russian air defense unit in Tajikistan is still in a difficult position. Major Yaroslav Mospan, the division commander's deputy for work with personnel, was abducted from his apartment here by armed strangers. The 201st Motorized Rifle Division's armored group was sent to search for the missing officer. The corpse of Yaroslav Mospan was finally found near the village of Rokhaty (Kofirnikhonskiy Rayon) 16 February.

According to the results of a medical examination, the officer was brutally tortured and was already dead when he was shot with an assault rifle.

Uzbekistan

Tatarstan's Prime Minister Arrives for Visit

OW1802135593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1133 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A state delegation from Tatarstan headed by Prime Minister Mukhammad Sabirov on Wednesday [17 February] arrived in Uzbekistan. The delegation's two-day visit will include talks with the Uzbek Cabinet of Ministers and the signing of an economic trade agreement between the two republics.

Cooperation Agreement Signed

OW1902185093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1642 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Relations between Uzbekistan and Tatarstan should be formed on the basis of business relations, said Uzbek President Islam Karimov on Thursday [18 February] at a meeting in Tashkent with Tatar Prime Minister Mukhammad Sabirov. He emphasized that priorities in bilateral cooperation should go to opening and developing national fuel and energy resources, developing the chemical industry and the military-industrial complex.

The Tatar prime minister in his turn remarked that his republic had chosen the "soft path" to a market economy, thanks to which it has been possible to avoid social tensions and the economy's sliding into a deep crisis. According to Sabirov, conditions are now positive in Tatarstan for mutually profitable cooperation with Uzbekistan.

On the same day in Tashkent an agreement was signed on trade, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation and a protocol on supplies of goods and services during 1993 between Uzbekistan and Tatarstan.

President Appoints Ambassador to United States

LD2002143193 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in Russian 1200 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] By decree of the Uzbekistan president, Muhammadobir Malikov has been released from his duties as justice minister and appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Uzbekistan to the United

States. Muhammadobir Malikov is the second ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan (after the ambassador to Turkey). He was born in 1948 and is a lawyer by profession. Malikov graduated from Tashkent University and for 20 years worked in the republic's law enforcement agencies—the procuracy and the courts. For two years he was chairman of the Supreme Court and for two years he was justice minister. Malikov is married with three daughters and one grandson. Incidentally, the new ambassador is the grandson of Yuldash Akhunbabayev, the first—under the communists—chairman of the Uzbekistan Supreme Soviet Presidium.

Armenia

Explosion Damages Georgian Pipeline; Cuts Gas Supply

NC1902133793 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Vigen Chitechyan said today during a news conference at the Armenian Council of Ministers that the gas pipeline in Georgia's Marneulskiy Rayon was blown up again on the night of 18-19 February some 4 to 5 km south of the site of the previous explosion. The new explosion damaged a 40-meter-long section of the pipeline. The volume of incoming gas fell to the minimum at 0200 on 19 February.

It also was reported during the news conference that Armenian and Georgian experts already have been sent to the accident site.

Consequences Viewed

OW1902145293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1410 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At about 4 a.m. Friday [19 February] the gas pipeline which runs through Georgia to Armenia was exploded for a third time, again in Georgia's Merneuli region mostly populated by Azeris, Armenian Minister of Fuel and Energy, Vladimir Kurginyan [name as received], informed INTERFAX.

He also said that although Georgia had assumed responsibility for the pipeline's security, it failed to ensure it once again.

On Friday morning, Armenia's emergency headquarters discussed the consequences of the explosion. While repairs are done, all electricity will go to industrial enterprises and to the most vitally important facilities, such as bakeries and hospitals. The Armenian subway will run three fewer hours.

Armenia's Minister for Construction, Gagik Martirosyan [name as received], expressed hope that the repair operations will not last longer than five days.

The gas pipeline running through Georgia is Armenia's only source of gas. Through it, Armenia receives 4 mn [million] cubic meters of gas daily, although its daily demand amounts to 7.5 mn cubic meters. The other gas pipeline, laid through Azerbaijan's Kazakh region, has been blocked for more than a year now.

Government Blames 'Sabotage'

LD1902203593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1856 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 19 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—The explosion on the gas pipeline in the Marneuli rayon of Georgia last night was a result of sabotage, an ITAR-TASS correspondent was told by the Armenian Government's press service.

Vigen Chitechyan, deputy prime minister of Armenia, revealed at a news conference in Yerevan today that, according to preliminary data, the explosion damaged an 40 meter-long underground section of the gaspipe line three kilometers from the Armenian border. The deputy prime minister recalled the agreement signed recently in Tbilisi in accordance with which the Georgian side assumed the responsibility to ensure the safety of the gas pipeline. At the same time, Chitechyan pointed out, Tbilisi refused to agree to Yerevan's proposal of jointly guarding the pipeline.

As a result of the explosion, the supply of gas to Yerevan has been halted for the third time since the beginning of this year.

Government To Ensure 'Safe Operation'

OW2002113993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1115 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Armenian government has published a statement saying the three successive explosions on a pipeline supplying Armenia with natural gas have caused a situation threatening the republic's vital interests. For this reason, the government reserves for itself the right to take any steps that might be necessary to ensure the safe operation of all arteries linking the republic with the outside world.

On February 19, there was a new explosion, the third one for the past month, on the pipeline's section running through the Marneuli District of Georgia, mainly populated by Azeris. The previous explosions occurred on January 22 and February 11.

Armenia today receives all its gas via this pipeline. The other one, running through the Kazakh District of Azerbaijan, has been out of operation for a year.

The hasty release of the persons arrested on suspicion of staging the February 11 explosion and the Georgian government's failure to make a clear statement on these incidents prompt the conclusion that "the policy of state terrorism is becoming an acceptable method in the region, and, following the latest Georgian-Azerbaijani summit, has increasingly been taking a clear shape," the Armenian government says. All this, it says, is a gross violation of the agreements signed by the Armenian and Georgian governments, in particular of the protocol signed in Tbilisi on February 8, 1993, in which Georgia pledged to protect the pipeline.

According to the deputy general director of the Armgaztoplivo state enterprise, Roland Adonts, it will take about three days to restore the pipeline's damaged part. Armenian specialists have already started repair work.

The Georgian authorities have expressed concern about the new incident.

Gas Supplies Resume

LD2202093293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0917 GMT 22 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 22 Feb—After a three-day interruption, gas again began reaching Armenia early this morning along the gas pipeline through Georgia, which was blown up yet again last Friday. As Roland Adonts, chief engineer of the state undertaking Armgastoplivo, told an ITAR-TASS correspondent, Armenia, which lies at the end of the gas pipeline, suffers every time other consumers of Turkmen gas—from Uzbekistan to Georgia—siphon off more fuel than they are entitled to under the quotas defined by intergovernmental agreements.

NSDA Leads 'Thousands' to President's Residence

NC1902135993 Yerevan SNARK in English 0414 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Yerevan, February 18 (SNARK)—A meeting has been called today at the Theatre Square in Yerevan by Paruyr Hayrikyan, the leader of opposition National Self-Determination Association (NSDA). About 100 thousand people at the meeting demanded for the present leadership dismissal and were for convocation of the constituent assembly in order to adopt the constitution of Armenia. Paruyr Hayrikyan declared his anti-crisis program—a creation of temporary state council, which is to exercise the legislative and executive power during three months, while the constituent assembly will carry out and adopt the constitution. Hayrikyan suggested 15 representatives from all political parties to enter the state council, that is three representatives from Armenian Revolutionary Federation ("Dashnaks"), another three from NSDA, and one from each other seven parties, including the present president, prime-minister or their representatives. The suggested temporary government structure proposes to have Vazgen Manukyan as a minister of defence, Raffi Hovannisyan as a foreign minister, the internal minister is supposed to be a "Dashnak" representative. Hayrikyan considers, that cabinet should be headed by one of the other parties. In an hour thousands of people moved to the president residence, which has been guarded by internal troops since morning.

Protest Economic Crisis

NC2002150093 Paris AFP in English 1305 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] Yerevan, Feb 20 (AFP)—Tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the centre of Yerevan Saturday [20 February] to protest the republic's economic crisis, worsened Friday by an explosion which cuts its only gas supply pipeline.

As the protesters braved freezing temperatures, the government accused neighbouring Azerbaijan of sabotaging the gas pipeline as part of the ongoing dispute between the republics over the Nagorno- Karabakh enclave.

"State terrorism has become an acceptable fact in the region. Such acts threaten the vital interests of Armenia," said a government statement accusing Azerbaijan of causing the explosions.

The rally marked the fifth anniversary of demonstrations in 1988 calling for independence for enclave, which is on Azeri territory but which has a mostly Armenian population.

The five-year dispute with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, and an Azeri economic blockade, have led to widespread power cuts, lack of heating and rationing. Armenia imports 96 percent of its energy needs.

Saturday's demonstration, organized by groups including the Popular Movement of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenian), and Armenian opposition groups, also called for the resignation of the government of President Levon Ter-Petrosyan.

The gas pipeline explosion Friday, on Georgian territory which the line crosses from Turkmenistan to reach Armenia, was the third such incident in two months. The region where the blast occurred in occupied by Azeris.

The government statement accusing Azerbaijan of sabotage also accused Georgia of doing nothing to prevent it. The statement said Georgia had agreed to protect the pipeline in an agreement signed earlier this month.

The statement said Georgia had been more passive over protecting the supply since a meeting on Feb 4 between its president Eduard Shevardnadze and the Azeri president, Abulfaz Elchibey.

Arrests Reported

NC1902141493 Yerevan SNARK in English 0403 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Yerevan, February 18 (SNARK)—20 leaders of the [National] Self-Determination Unit [Association], have been arrested in Yerevan. Among them are women and Susanna Avakyan, wife of Paruyr Hayrikyan, leader of the unit of self-determination. It took place just after the peaceful and well-organized meeting where were present about 100,000 people.

Meeting was at the entrance of the Armenian president residence. The self-determination unit spoke for calling up the constituent assembly. Headquarters of the self-determination unit has informed SNARK's reporter the arrests were done by the civil not military people. It is supposed that they are the employees of the national security department. The cars were captured. Headquarters has also informed now the members of the self-determination unit headed by Paruyr Hayrikyan are making their way to the building of the national security department.

Foreign Ministry Responds to U.S. Note on Nagorno-Karabakh

OW1902173793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1656 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Armenian foreign ministry says that both Yerevan and Stepanakert have long expressed their readiness to establish peace in Nagorno-Karabakh immediately and without any preconditions.

"The Azerbaijani government, however, is rejecting the idea of a peaceful settlement, still hoping to resolve the conflict by power methods," reads the note the Armenian foreign ministry forwarded to the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan.

The Armenian foreign ministry was responding to a U.S. note which was recently received by the Armenian MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] and Nagorno-Karabakh mission in Yerevan. The U.S. note is reflective of the American government's apprehension over the escalation of combat operations in Mardakert District in Nagorno-Karabakh. The U.S. is concerned that Armenian offensive operations in that region may obstruct the settlement of Karabakh problem in the framework of the CSCE.

Washington Sends Protest Note

OW2102174493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1659 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The US government condemned the escalation of Armenian military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azerbajani Foreign Ministry informed INTERFAX with reference to Azerbaijan's permanent mission in the UN.

For the past few days, the Armenian army has been intensifying the offensive on the Azeri positions, occupying several villages in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The US note of protest, sent to Armenia, says that the Azeri- Armenian conflict may be settled only within the framework of peaceful talks.

Rally Protests U.S. Stand on Nagorno-Karabakh

LD2102145293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1437 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan February 21 TASS—Several thousand residents of the Armenian capital Yerevan rallied in front on the opera theatre on Sunday [21 February] to mark the fifth anniversary of the decision by Nagorno-Karabakh authorities to join Armenia. The rally was organised by the Union of the Armenian Intelligentsia and supported by several opposition parties and movements.

In a resolution adopted by the rally, the participants urged Armenian leaders to officially recognise the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region as a republic. They believe this will create "favourable political, economic, diplomatic and defence guarantees both for Armenia and Karabakh, and will initiate the process of recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh by other countries and the United Nations organisation."

The rally also voiced a protest to the U.S. Embassy in Armenia "against extremely impartial position [as received] of the U.S. state bodies which consider the liberation of the occupied Armenian villages in Karabakh as activities hampering the negotiation process within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe." The demonstrators questioned the "peacekeeping mission of democratic America" and denounced the "unobjective assessment" of the events in Nagorno-Karabakh by the United States.

"When Azerbaijani militants mercilessly burnt down Armenian villages turning them into ruins, U.S. state officials kept dead silent," the resolution said. "Now that Karabakh defenders are making super-human, heroic efforts to recapture pillaged Armenian villages from the enemy, U.S. State Department officials are concerned with raising a clamour and openly defending real aggressors," the resolution said.

Forces Wage Offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, Seize Villages

OW2002181793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to well-informed sources in Yerevan, the self-defense forces of Nagorno-Karabakh are exerting control over all liberated villages of the Mardakert region and over the highway Kelbadzhar-Mardakert. On Friday [19 February] they repelled the attack of the Azerbaijani formations in the direction of the village of Khramort of the Askeran region. Continuing their counterattack, the Karabakh detachments have freed the villages of Chapar and Zardakhach.

On February 19 two people were shot dead in the result of the artillery shelling of Stepanakert, the administrative center of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The press center of the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry reported that the situation in the north of Karabakh has sharply aggravated at night from February 19 to 20. The Armenian units have begun a new widescale offence in the result of which the units of the Azerbaijani army were forced to leave the strategically important village of Aterk.

Ministry Denies Reports on Russian Troop Deployment

NC1902160793 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Armen Dulyan, head of the Armenian Defense Ministry press service, told a SNARK correspondent that not a single Russian division is being transferred to Armenia and that the Armenian leadership has not appealed to Russia with such a request.

This statement was made in connection with the [word indistinct] Azerbaijani press reports alleging that two [Russian] motorized infantry divisions from Germany are being transferred to Armenia.

Armen Dulyan said that the Azerbaijani leadership is making these allegations in order to justify the major defeats suffered by the Azerbaijani Army in northern Nagorno-Karabakh. Armen Dulyan did not rule out the possibility that the allegation is an attempt to provoke anti-Russian sentiment in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan

Defense Minister's Resignation Accepted

NC2002135493 Baku TURAN in English 1010 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] Baku, 20 Feb (TURAN)—As the TURAN agency was informed by the informational source, the Azeri Minister of Defence Rakhim Gaziyev sent in his resignation. Resignation is accepted.

This decision was taken by the minister after yesterday's closed session of the Milli Mejlis where the Ministry of Defence and the minister himself were subjected to the severe criticism for serious failures on front.

It is expected that today the President of the Republic Abulfaz Elchibey will appeal to people in connection with resignation of Rakhim Gaziyev.

Rakhim Gaziyev was appointed the minister of defence in March of 1992 year after the capture by Armenians the town of Khodzhaly in Nagorno-Karabakh.

During his leadership of Defence Ministry the Armenian army captured the Azeri regions of Shushinskiy and Lachinskiy. But later the Azeri Army restored balance of losses taken the Azeri regions of Geranboyskiy (former Shaumyanovskiy) and Agderinskiy (former Mardakertskiy) under its control.

Elchibey Appoints New Defense Minister

NC2102194793 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 21 Feb 93

["Text" of decree by President Abulfaz Elchibey; date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] Dadash Garib oglu Rizayev is appointed minister of defense. This decree shall be submitted to Azerbaijan's National Assembly for approval.

[Signed] Abulfaz Elchibey, president of Azerbaijan

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1152 GMT on 21 February adds: "54-year-old General Dadash Rizayev was appointed Azerbaijan's Defence Minister on Sunday [21 February]. He replaced Rakhim Gaziyev, who resigned on Friday. It is believed that the reason for his resignation was Azerbaijan's military failures in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh: the Azeris have had to leave more than ten villages since the year began.

["Until recently General Rizayev was in command of the army corps fighting in the area of active battles in Azerbaijan's five border districts, such as Martuni and Kedabek.

["Before the war in Nagorno-Karabakh Rizayev led the military department of Azerbaijan's Petroleum Academy. He is married and has two children."]

Fighting Continues in Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

LD1902184593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1753 GMT 19 Feb 93

[By AZERTAC correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Baku February 19 TASS—A tank and several vehicles of the enemy were destroyed on Thursday in the Karabakh north when repulsing an attack of Armenian armed units, the Azeri Defence Ministry reports today.

According to the ministry, the situation in the conflict zone remains generally tense, fierce fighting for strategically important populated localities is reported from the Agderinskiy region.

A temporary correspondent post of the Defence Ministry's Information-Analytical Center has been set up in the region to transmit operative information from the front line. According to its latest report, the national Army controls positions in the north of the Sarsangskiy storage pond and the road to several local settlements and heights near them.

Defense Ministry Updates Fighting, Issues Call to Deserters

NC2102194193 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry Analytical Information Center's communique reads:

Fierce fighting took place in Agdere Rayon today, but the military situation has not changed. Our subunits have established a defense line around the Sarsang reservoir. The clashes are mainly around Kasabet height, which our troops have fortified.

The Armenians attacked our positions in Fizulinskiy Rayon from Yukhary Veyselli at 0500 today. The enemy was forced to retreat as a result of precision shelling by our artillery units. An Armenian tank was disabled in the vicinity of [placename indistinct].

The border areas in Kazakhskiy and Akstafa Rayons were fired on from Armenia early this morning. The situation in the other disputed areas has been peaceful.

The officers and men of the military units in Terterskiy Rayon extend their condolences to the relatives of Captain Yaratir Mirzayev and Mehrab Aghayev, who died heroically in the fighting around Aterk. God bless the souls of all the sons of the homeland who have died in the sacred war.

Here is an announcement: The troops under Lieutenant Colonel Rafiyev are instructed to urgently return to their posts. Otherwise they will be seriously punished.

Fighting in Agdere Rayon Worsens

NC1902205193 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] The Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense Analytical Information Center issued the following communique today:

The fighting in Agdere Rayon worsened today. The Armenian occupation forces attacked Mekhmana from (Kurdemir) and Chapar from Vaguaz. Our fighters stopped the attack on Mekhmana and forced the enemy to retreat. The fighting around Chapar is continuing.

The Azerbaijan military sub-units have launched combat operations to establish security on the only road to our areas north of the Sarsang water reservoir. They have Armenian positions in [placename indistinct], which is close to Drmbon, under their control. They are now fighting for Drmbon itself.

Armenian news agencies have reported that the Armenian military units have occupied Khramort, Zardakhach, and Aterk. The Armenian side's unfounded and deliberate reports indicate that the enemy plans to occupy these towns. We officially announce that our fighters have complete control of the towns.

Several members of the Analytical Information Center were sent to Agdere when the Armenian Armed Forces attacked that rayon some time ago. They have provided information on the fighting every day. Another group of employees have been dispatched to Agdere to make an on-sight inspection of that part of the front line. They arrived at Aterk, which is in the northern part of the Sarsang water reservoir, yesterday and established the situation in the area. They also established that our fighters control the region and the road in it. They were expected to make an on-site inspection of the situation in the southern part of the reservoir today. Our fighters control Mekhmana and the nearby heights in that area.

Our employees will hold a press conference at the Defense Ministry to brief journalists more extensively on the incidents in that region. They will also provide videotape recordings on the situation in the front line.

Karabakh Forces Seize Village of Aterk

LD2002155893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1520 GMT 20 Feb 93

[By ARMENPRESS correspondent Loris Gukasyan for TASS]

[Text] Yerevan, 20 Feb—The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's self-defense forces have liberated Aterk, one of the largest villages of Mardakert Rayon, from the Azerbaijani military formations. The Nagarno-Karabakh Republic's self-defense forces continue to control all the villages of Mardakert Rayon they previously liberated as well as the Kelbadzhar-Mardakert road.

An attack undertaken by Azerbaijani formations near Khramort in Askeran Rayon was repelled last night. Developing the offensive the Karabakh detachments captured the villages of Chapar and Zardakhach. They then took up advantageous positions on approaches to the village of Aterk which made it possible to seize the village.

Armenian Missiles Hit Kekhna Gyshlag, Ag Keinek Villages

LD2102145193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1452 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By AZERTAC-TASS]

[Text] Baku February 21—Rain of artillery and missile shells came down on the villages of Kekhna Gyshlag in the Akstafa and Ag Keinek in the Kazakh districts of Azerbaijan on Sunday, the information and analytical centre of the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry told the AZERTAC news agency.

The centre said the missiles were launched from Armenia.

Meanwhile, fighting has subsided in northern districts of the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijani militants have driven the Armenians out from the Karsapet hill in the Agderi district, the centre said.

Armenia Forces Withdrawal From 18 North Karabakh Villages

LD2202135893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1257 GMT 22 Feb 93

[By AZERTAC-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Baku February 22 TASS—"According to the latest reports from the frontline, the Azeri Army had to withdraw from 18 populated localities in the northern part of Nagorno-Karabakh under the pressure a large-scale offensive launched there by Armenian forces. The azeris have thereby lost control over almost a half of Agderin district," a press conference at the Azeri Defence Ministry was told here today.

Head of the Azeri Defence Ministry's information-analytic centre Leila Yunusova believes the setbacks are explained, among other reasons, by the fact that "the National Army of Azerbaijan was lately drawn into political games". She also told the press conference about her decision to resign from the post of director of the centre.

President's Press Service Accuses Armenia of 'Aggression'

LD2002163293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1545 GMT 20 Feb 93

[By AZERTAG correspondent - Tass]

[Text] Baku, 20 Feb—"Armenia has not renounced its expansionist policy which threatens the peaceful settlement of the conflict between the two Transcaucasion republics." This was revealed in a statement by the Azerbaijani president's press service distributed yesterday evening via AZERTAG. The Armenian expeditionary corps has expanded the scale of its aggression by going on an offensive in the north of Karabakh on 5 February, the document underlines.

"The expansion of the Armenian aggression in Azerbaijan," the document points out, "is connected with the deterioration of the political crisis in Yerevan."

While condemning Armenia's actions and those of its protectors which threaten to disrupt a regular round of the meeting in Rome on Karabakh held within the CSCE, the press service at the same time states, the negotiation process which the Azerbaijani side has repeatedly insisted on can be resumed only if international guarantees are ensured.

Georgia

Shevardnadze Says State of Emergency Possible

LD2002213293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] If democracy finds itself under threat, a state of emergency regime will be introduced throughout Georgia, State Council Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze said on Saturday [20 February] at a conference of the staff of the republic's law-enforcement agencies.

Sources Say Hostilities Near Sukhumi Increasing

OW2002182393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1719 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the messages from the Abkhazian sources, on Saturday [20 February] the hostilities near Sukhumi became more active. The Georgian forces subjected the Abkhazian positions and the seismic laboratory of the Russian forces in the village of Nizhnyaya Eshera to massive artillery shelling.

In its turn, the press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry reported that the fire was opened in response to artillery shelling of the living quarters in Sukhumi, in the result of which the adversary's firing points were suppressed.

On Friday evening there were several clashes in the Ochamchira region near the villages of Starye Kindgi and Merkula. The Georgian forces lost 2 people dead and 3 wounded. The losses of the Abkhazian side constitute 1 people dead and 5 wounded.

Bombing of Sukhumi Reported

AU2202111093 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0900 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] This morning, a reporter from the CONTACT news agency telephoned Sukhumi and recorded information given by Batoni [Georgian polite form of address] Soso (?Vardishvili), head of the press center of the Georgian Armed Forces located in Abkhazia.

[Begin (?Vardishvili) recording] On 20 February, it was fairly tense in Abkhazia. Following a relatively quiet morning, at about 1100, a military aircraft with Russian markings—an SU-25—appeared above Sukhumi. From 1100 until 1800, it circled the city seven times and tried to bomb it. Antiaircraft fire from Georgia's Air Defense Forces prevented the plane from coming in low and launching a rocket attack on the city. On one occasion, the Russian SU-25 tried to move alongside a TU-134 passenger plane flying from Sukhumi to Sochi in order to try to use it as a shield and then attack several suburbs of the city. However, the passenger plane suddenly changed course, thus preventing the SU-25 from carrying out this maneuver. At about 2300, the military plane made its eighth combat sortie. Taking advantage of the dark, it managed to descend to a lower altitude and fired two rockets at a new residential suburb in the city. As a result of the explosions, more than (?10) residential houses suffered considerable damage and eight peaceful citizens were wounded, including the well-known Sukhumi journalist Tengiz Pachkoria. His father Gochia Pachkoria died.

The Georgian Armed Forces command has sent an immediate protest to the military authorities of the Russian Armed Forces situated in Gudauta in connection with this barbarous bombing and attempted bombing of residential areas of Sukhumi. They cynically stated that the bombing of Sukhumi represented a retaliatory act following the bombing of the Russian laboratory in Kvemo Eshera by the Georgian Armed Forces, which, in reality, did not take place.

At the time of the appearance of the Russian aircraft, the enemy became more active at the River Gumista. At approximately 1100, they opened fire with heavy mortars from the vicinity of Eshera in the direction of our combat positions, as a result of which three of our fighters were slightly wounded. Following return artillery fire, one mortar belonging to the enemy and its (?crew) were destroyed on the spot. The remainder ceased firing.

During the day, the enemy again opened fire several times on our positions. Two shells were fired at the [name indistinct] region of Sukhumi. The explosions did not result in any casualties or destruction.

From 1700, the enemy began transferring heavy equipment in the vicinity of Zemo and Kvemo Eshera. However, following return fire by the Georgian Armed Forces, they halted their activities.

From 0000, the night passed off relatively quietly. [end recording]

Russia Denies Responsibility

LD2102125493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1209 GMT 21 Feb 93

[By GEORGIAN INFORMATION AGENCY and TASS correspondents]

[Text] Tbilisi, 21 Feb—[passage omitted] The GEORGIAN INFORMATION AGENCY has reported that the Georgian military maintains that the SU-25 plane that bombed Sukhumi on Saturday belongs to a Russian military unit stationed in the Abkhazian settlement of Bombora. The Georgian troop command has sent a protest to the command of this unit in connection with this incident.

Moscow, 21 Feb—At the present time, the group of Russian troops in the Transcaucasus does not have military planes, an ITAR-TASS correspondent was informed by phone from Tbilisi by the operational duty officer of the command of the group of Russian troops in the Transcaucasus.

Shevardnadze Vows 'Adequate' Reaction

OW2102134093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1329 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chairman of Georgia's parliament, Eduard Shevardnadze, has described Saturday's [20 February] bombing of Sukhumi as "a barbarous action". Accompanied by Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua, he arrived in Sukhumi on Sunday and inspected the area that had been subjected to bombing.

Georgia's "reaction to that action will be adequate", he told the local people. He did not elaborate as to what it will be expressed in.

On Sunday the Georgian leader is meeting with the command of Georgia's troops deployed in Abkhazia.

Reports on Plane 'Contradictory'

LD2102165593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1618 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] Moscow February 21 TASS—The Russian Defence Ministry has denied media reports about the "bombing of a residential area in Sukhumi by a Russian military plane."

The ministry brushed away reports as not corresponding with the reality, adding that during the whole day of February 20, the post of Russian paratroopers in Eshery was shelled by Georgian militants.

The Russian plane carried out a retaliatory strike on the detected targets. The accusation against the Russian Air Forces of bombing a residential area in Sukhumi is groundless, the ministry said.

Meanwhile, reports about the plane coming from Sukhumi are contradictory. None of the witnesses of the raid, including specialists could make out the identification marks on the plane and its make.

However, well informed sources said that the Abkhazian side had earlier converted a highway section near Gagra into a runway for military planes. According to other reports, the Confederation of Highland Nations also has several L-29 training planes made in Czechoslovakia. They look similar to Soviet Union-25 fighter planes and are capable of carrying missiles and bombs.

Some independent military experts do not rule out the possibility that the bombing raid was carried out by one of the L-29 planes.

Shevardnadze Interviewed on Bombing

AU2202162293 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0900 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Here is an interview given by Batoni [Georgian polite form of address] Eduard Shevardnadze this morning to the Alioni program. The interviewer is journalist Sulkhan Meladze.

[Begin recording] [Meladze] Batoni Eduard, there is the view that the plane that bombed Sukhumi belongs to the Russian Armed Forces. Today, however, the news media have offered a different version, namely that the plane could have belonged to the Caucasian Peoples Confederation. Can you confirm this, and also whether Sorokin, chief of the [Russian] Armed Forces in Gudauta, has arrived in Sukhumi to meet with you?

[Shevardnadze] According to the information that we have, this was a plane based at the Bombora airfield. It was a Russian plane. There should not be any doubt about this. If it came from the North Caucasus, the same units deployed there have the means to prevent this or shoot [the plane] down. So, one way or another, it is connected with those leaders, he military authorities, who are gathered in Gudauta. By this, I mean representatives of the Russian Army.

[Meladze] They are to assume responsibility for this?

[Shevardnadze] I believe they should assume full responsibility. When I return to Tbilisi, I will probably have the opportunity to speak with the Russian Government about this. Regarding Sorokin's arrival, he was unable to come, probably for these reasons. Two days earlier, my personal representative was there, however, and, it was generally (?agreed) that one or two of our officers would definitely be (?sent) to their headquarters as permanent observers in order to (?check) that no action is taken against us. Unfortunately, this has not happened.

[Meladze] Relations between Russia and Georgia have been tense lately. What affect do you think the 20 February incident will have on the fourth round of negotiations?

[Shevardnadze] I think, of course, that it will be only negative. Those who saw the pictures yesterday, the situation that we are actually facing, the bombing.... Unfortunately, this was not the first bombing; it seems that they they are concentrating on residential apartments and districts. This will, of course, make Russian-Georgian relations more complex and difficult. This is in the interests of neither the Russian nor the Georgian people. I believe that certain forces are (?interested) in damaging our relations.

[Meladze] Batoni Eduard, yesterday you met with the Abkhaz Salvation Committee. What can you tell us about this meeting?

[Shevardnadze] Batoni Tengiz Sigua and I spoke with Batoni Tamaz Nadereishvili [head of the pro-Georgian Abkhaz Government] at this meeting, and I have to say that this meeting, along with the meeting with the people of the city, made a tremendous impression upon me. The majority of the representatives of the Abkhaz intelligentsia were there. We spoke about how Georgians and Abkhaz would live together in the future. These people are thinking about the future. The second interesting thing is that, in spite of all the casualties and misfortune, there have been as many as 90 marriages registered in Sukhumi. Last night, the eighth—it probably wasn't (?celebrated) in the way that we are used to—took place between a young Georgian and an Abkhaz. There have been many during these last few months. So, these two peoples have inherited this historical aspiration toward [word indistinct] friendship. This goal remains, it is still alive. I am certain that this war will end and these two people will live nevertheless [words indistinct]

[Meladze] One final question, if you don't mind. How do you view the second conference held yesterday by the National-Liberation Movement?

[Shevardnadze] I don't know the details. In view of what I have just seen and experienced in Sukhumi—the freezing city, the [word indistinct] people, these districts in ruins, the human casualties, the results of war—it is difficult for me to speak about any sessions or conferences. When I return [to Tbilisi], I will (?find out) all the details and express my opinion.

[Meladze] Batoni Eduard, thank you very much. Would you like to add anything else?

[Shevardnadze] No. I thank you. Now, [words indistinct] my program [words indistinct] When I return, I will get in touch and share my views with you. Thank you.

[Meladze] Once again, thank you very much. [end recording]

Fighting Continues Amid Protest

AU2202112493 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0900 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] [Words indistinct] Soso (?Vardishvili), head of the Press Center of the Main Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces in Sukhumi.

[Begin (?Vardishvili) recording] On 21 February, the Georgian Armed Forces command again protested to the leadership of the Russian Armed Forces over the barbarous bombing of Sukhumi on 20 February. This time, the Russian military stated that their planes had not bombed Sukhumi and that not a single Russian military aircraft had taken off from Bombora airport on 20 February.

Until 1700 it remained quiet at the River Gumista. Thereafter, the enemy began fairly active combat actions. They brought two infantry fighting vehicles up to the frontline and these frequently changed their positions and fired at our defense line. At about 2000, a glider appeared from a fairly high altitude. It approached our positions and then returned in the direction of Akhali Atoni. From 2100, the enemy brought four infantry fighting vehicles into action on the frontline. At the same time, there was a concentration of manpower in Kvemo Eshera and in the vicinity of [words indistinct]. As soon as the enemy became more active, the Georgian Armed Forces put themselves in a full state of combat readiness, although initially they did not return fire. When the enemy's activities soon took on a more serious character, they opened fire, resulting in the enemy halting their combat actions.

The night passed off quietly.

As regards Ochamchire rayon, there were no extraordinary events during the day or night.

Yesterday evening, a Kabardinian crossed the River Gumista. He was captured and arrested. [end recording]

Abkhazia Reports 'Heavy Fighting'

OW2202124493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1115 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] There was continued heavy fighting, including artillery fire, in the last 24 hours on the front lines between Georgian and Abkhazian formations on the Gumista river near Sukhumi. The Abhkazian defense ministry reports that Georgian forces again fired upon the Russian forces' military laboratory in the village of Nizhny Eshera.

As a result of return fire, the Abkhazians reported, three Georgian anti-aircraft installations and a bunker containing soldiers were destroyed.

The Abkhazians further reported that during fighting in the Ochamchir region, Abkhazian soldiers killed eleven soldiers, wounded 30, and destroyed an armored personnel carrier. The partisan movement of the Ochamchir region did not report on Abkhazian casualties.

The press service of the Georgian Defense Ministry, for its part, reports the stoppage of Georgian artillery attacks on the Abkhazians as of the evening of 21 February.

Shevardnadze Blames Russians

OW2202121793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1116 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze has laid the full responsibility for the raid carried out by a Russian bomber on residential areas of Sukhumi February 20 on the Russian forces command in Abkhazia. The raid resulted in the death of one person and injuries to eight others, according to information from Sukhumi.

In an interview with Georgian television, Shevardnadze, who was visiting Abkhazia at the time of the raid, expressed the view that the bombing would complicate the forthcoming talks between Georgia and Russia in Moscow. He said that this was one of many "intrigues by certain groups with the desire to make relations between our countries more difficult." Shevardnadze stated that the attack on Sukhumi would be discussed with the Russian leadership when he returned to Tbilisi.

The Russian Defense Ministry has announced that the raid by the Russian bomber had been carried out in retaliation for a Georgian artillery attack on a Russian unit in the village of Nizhnaya Eshera close to Sukhumi.

Abkhazia Claims Responsibility

LD2202112893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1120 GMT 22 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The Abkhazian Defence Ministry claimed responsibility for air raiding Georgian positions in Sukhumi on Saturday [20 February].

An L-39 plane belonging to Abkhazian air force dealt "a retaliatory bomb strike on positions of Georgian occupation forces" in Sukhumi, the press centre of the Abkhazian parliamenmt told TASS on Monday quoting the Defence Ministry and adding that an anti- aircraft installation was destroyed during the attack.

Earlier reports said that one person had been killed and eight wounded in Georgian-controlled Sukhumi during the air raid and that the city suffered damage.

The Russian Defence Ministry categorically denied on Monday the allegations that its air force was involved in the raid.

A spokesman of the ministry told TASS that on Sunday a depot of military vehicles of a Russian paratroop unit in Sukhumi came under fire, but no casualties were reported. Paratroopers did not fire in response.

Fighting Continues 22 Feb

LD2202130993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1256 GMT 22 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—Georgian-Abkhazian fighting continued on Monday along the Eshery-Sukhumi frontline near the Gumista River.

Georgian forces used a "Grad" rocket launcher to shell the settlement of Gvandra. Abkhazian artillery destroyed three Georgian anti-aircraft installations, TASS learned by telephone from the press centre of the Abkhazian parliament in Gudauta.

Fighting also continued along the Ochamchira-Tkvarcheli frontline. Abkhazian settlements of Kutol, Beslakhu, Pakuash came under Georgian volley fire.

On Sunday Abkhazian guerrillas reportedly destroyed one Georgian infantry fighting vehicle.

Immediate Russian Withdrawal Demanded

LD2202154593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1515 GMT 22 Feb 93

[GEORGIAN NEWS AGENCY for TASS]

[Text] Tbilisi February 22 TASS—An extraordinary conference of the Georgian National Liberation Movement called by opposition political parties has adopted a series of resolutions demanding immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and the restoration of the country's 1921 Constitution, on the basis of which to elect a new parliament.

While the conference was in progress, an explosion rocked the hall causing panic among those present but fortunately hurting no-one.

Joint Communique on Shakhray's Tbilisi Visit Issued

OW1902143393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1409 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia and Georgia are in favor of a peaceful political settlement of the Abkhazian conflict and for an early resumption of the talks in accordance with the Moscow agreements of September 3, 1992 and with due account taken of the current situation. Such a statement was made in the communique which sums up the results of the talks in Tbilisi, held by Russia's Vice-Premier Sergey Shakhray and Chairman of the Russian parliament's Council of Nationalities Ramazan Abdulatipov. The negotiating parties believe that the Control and Inspection Commission for Cease-fire and Settlement of Conflicts should resume its work.

Russia's representatives expressed the opinion that Russian-Georgian relations may improve only if Georgian leaders take resolute measures to protect the rights of Russian servicemen and ethnic and religious minorities in Georgia, and help refugees of different nationalities to return to their homes, above all in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, in Abkhazia and in Georgia's inner regions.

On its part, Tbilisi stated that many problems, including the return of the refugees, can only be solved if all of the illegal formations operating in the conflict zone are disarmed, if Russian troops are withdrawn from this zone and if the efficiency of the peace-keeping force is enhanced. It believes that the peace-keeping contingent might take part in guarding the Russian-Georgian border in the zone of the Ossetian-Georgian conflict.

Moscow proposed that representatives of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Russia hold talks involving all of Georgia's conflicting parties and representatives of Russia's North Caucasian republics, territories and regions, in order to find ways of settling conflicts in the region.

Shevardnadze Cited on Talks

OW1902180693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1705 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze has described as "useful" consultations with Russian Vice-Prime Minister Sergey Shakhray and Chairman of the Russian Parliamentary Council of Nationalities Ramazan Abdulatipov which took place in Tbilisi Thursday [18 February]. Interfax was informed by Revaz Egadze, the Georgian leader's press spokesman, that the meeting was of a "purely consultative character and no definite decisions had been made."

Egadze announced that Shevardnadze had told a closed session of the Georgian parliament Thursday [18 February] that the Russian delegation had made "certain proposals" which would "require more time for thought and analysis." The spokesman also announced that the Russian side's main proposal had been to hold a conference of representatives from the Caucasian states and from Russia itself. Shevardnadze, Egadze said, considered that "such consultations would continue."

Shakhray told journalists after the meeting that he was satisfied with the dialogue that had taken place. He said that the most complicated issue discussed had been the conflict in Abkhazia. He stressed that it would be essential to find another way of achieving a cease-fire, splitting the warring sides and seeing that agreements reached were being observed. The vice-prime minister said that there were various options involved here, all of which had been discussed at the meeting with the Georgian head of state.

Shakhray rejected a report by the "NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA" newspaper that Russia would be grateful if Abkhazia were to express the desire to join the Russian Federation. He stressed that Russia, in relations with the regions concerned, was being guided by international standards and rules, one of which was the recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity. The Russian representative expressed the view that Georgia would be able to find a formula for the demarcation of powers with Abkhazia and settle the conflict without impairing the republic's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

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Collegium Attitude 'Negative'

OW2002162593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1415 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Georgian parliament's senior administrative body, the collegium, has expressed a negative attitude to the communique on the official visit to Tbilisi of Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Shakhray and the chairman of the Russian parliament's Council of Nationalities, Ramazan Abdulatipov.

Closer consideration is to be given to the matter at a parliament session on Tuesday February 23.

Estonia

Envoy Addresses NATO on Defense, Security Issues

WS2202135593 Tallinn BNS in English 1952 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Brussels, 19 February 1993, BNS—Estonia is interested in assistance by NATO and its member countries in shaping its defence and security policy as well as in building up the defence forces, said the Estonian Ambassador to Brussels, Clyde Kull.

While speaking at Thursday's [18 February] joint meeting of the NATO Military Committee and the NATO cooperation partners, Kull said it is necessary that "a group of experts in the respective field visited Estonia". He said Estonia needs direct help also in border defence and in fighting the environmental damage inflicted by the Russian army.

The meeting gave a positive evaluation of the cooperation between NATO and its partners in military issues in 1992. The cooperation programme included a number of high-level meetings and seminars on the setup of the defence forces in democratic countries. First officers from the cooperation partner countries last year entered the NATO College in Rome. The meeting also approved this year's plan of cooperation in military issues.

'Direct Help' Required

LD2202131093 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Estonia is interested in assistance from NATO and its members states to determine defense and security policy and to build up defense forces, said Clyde Kull, Estonian ambassador to Brussels. Speaking at yesterday's military committee meeting with cooperation partners Clyde Kull said that it would be necessary for a group of advisers to visit Estonia. The ambassador noted that Estonia requires direct help also for its border guards and for dealing with the environmental pollution caused by the Russian army. [passage omitted]

Swedish Prime Minister Bildt Vows Defense Aid

OW2102203993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1625 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Friday [19 February], Swedish and Estonian Prime Ministers Carl Bildt and Mart Laar discussed ways of developing Estonia's defense forces following the withdrawal of the Russian troops.

The two parties will urge the Russian government to allow international experts to inspect the Paldiski reactors. They also discussed the storage of nuclear wastes in Sillamae.

The Swedish premier promised render Estonia assistance in defusing the ammunition and mines, left behind by the Russian troops, and to train an Estonian bomb-disposal unit.

The two officials also discussed ways of broadening cooperation in guarding the borders and in combating illegal immigration. Carl Bildt said his government was ready to supply means of transportation, communication equipment and boats to the Estonian border guards, police, armed forces and rescue services.

To quote Mart Laar, the leaders of corresponding departments will begin specific negotiations soon.

Defense Spending 3.25 Percent of 1993 Budget

LD1902135193 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1500 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Estonian defense expenses amount to 3.25 percent of the state budget. This has been reported by ETA. ETA was told by the Defense Ministry that the budget for expenses is made up of two parts: current expenses and a long-term budget drawn up for three to five years. The Defense Ministry is starting from zero and for this reason its expenses, compared with other ministries, are larger.

Envoy 'Astonished' by Pending Moscow Trade Break

MK2002120093 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 20 Feb 93 p 2

[Mikhail Bredis report: "Purely Emotional Accusations"]

[Text] Juri Kahn, ambassador of the Estonian Republic to Moscow, gave KURANTY an exclusive interview outlining what he thought of Yuriy Luzhkov's recent statement about his intention to break off economic and trade relations with Estonia and Latvia.

"We were astonished at the news about a denunciation of the agreement between trading organizations in Estonia and the city of Moscow. I well remember how difficult it was for us to reach this mutually advantageous agreement, and the efforts made by Moscow government officials to secure additional possibilities of providing food for the city's inhabitants. The economy of the Estonian Republic is vigorously reorienting itself toward Western markets, and as far as we are concerned, 1,500 tonnes of butter and 500 tonnes of cheese is only a fraction of what Estonia has traditionally shipped to Moscow. We nevertheless viewed this as our contribution to solving the Russian capital's problems.

"I hope that Moscow administrators will be relying less on one-sided assessments, rumors, and purely emotional, unfounded accusations."

Laar Criticizes Defense Minister's Troop Decision

OW2102204193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1625 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonian Premier Mart Laar stated on Friday [19 February] that by giving his go-ahead to the arrival of an additional Russian contingent to Estonia, the Estonian defense minister assumed political responsibility for that act. He also said that the defense minister should have discussed his moves with the government and with the president as Estonia's supreme commander.

On February 18, 1993, the Estonian government annulled the resolution of August 6, 1992, which allowed Russian soldiers to arrive in Estonia and which regulated the procedure of crossing the Estonian border by Russian servicemen.

President Meri told the centrist faction of the Estonian parliament that the task of strengthening Estonia's defense forces and ensuring Estonia's security was the main task facing the parliament now.

As we reported earlier, the centrist faction proposed that on March 7, the parliament gather for an extraordinary session to discuss lack of coordination between Estonia's defense policies and the interests of the Estonian people.

Rebas: Deployment Approval 'Concealed'

OW1902132093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1205 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In the current year Russian servicemen were stationed in Estonia on a legal basis, conceded Estonia's Defense Minister, Hain Rebas, in a televised interview on Thursday [18 February]. However, he said, members of his ministry issued permits for the deployment of 164 servicemen on their own, without his knowledge.

Moreover, the minister said, the information connected with this was either concealed from him or was unobjective, as a result of which wrong decisions have been taken. For instance, Rebas himself signed one such permit on the basis of the data submitted to him. A few days later he had to cancel it.

As a result of special investigations the officials involved in this affair "were dismissed yesterday and today", Rebas said. "The process of recovery in the ministry is under way. New people will replace officials who compromised themselves," he stressed.

As we already reported, during the political scandal that erupted in this connection the opposition accused Prime Minister Mart Laar and the defense minister of consciously withholding information on the deployment of Russian servicemen in Estonia, and demanded that the defense minister resign. At a news conference held on Thursday the leaders of the faction belonging to the ruling Isamaa Party urged the opposition to give up these charges. The government, they said, intends to keep this issue under control.

Russian Military Entry Procedures To 'Tighten'

OW1902211393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1716 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Estonian government intends to tighten next week the border crossing regime for Russian servicemen, Baltfax has been told by the government press-service.

According to the new order, only the republican government may permit Russian servicemen to enter Estonia. This was so far within the competence of the defense ministry or the state defense departments at local self-governments. The government wants to declare invalid the present regime approved by the Tiit Vahi government on August 6, 1992.

The entry regime was tightened during the on-going scandal about the entry to Estonia in January of 164 Russian servicemen.

Cabinet To Revoke Vahi Russian Military Decree

LD1902182093 Tallinn Radio Estonia in English 1620 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Estonia is about to cancel former cabinet's anniversary gift to Russia. The Estonian Cabinet at its yesterday's [18 February] meeting ruled to revoke a decree issued by the cabinet of the former Prime Minister, Tiit Vahi.

The decree could be interpreted as giving the Russian military and their family members the right to visa-free entry into Estonia. The document stipulated that the Russian military and their family members could leave Estonia visa-free when producing special permits issued by Estonia's regional and municipal state defense departments. The document, a few paragraphs later, adds that the same permits entitle their holders to cross the border in both directions.

The decree was issued on 6 August 1992 on the anniversary of Estonia's official incorporation into the Soviet Union. A government somewhat sarcastically remarked yesterday that Vahi's government, with the move, had granted an anniversary gift to Russia. The decree will be formally revoked next week together with the adoption of a new document on the issue.

Border Defense Takes Over Undvanina Monitoring Station

WS1902131793 Tallinn BNS in English 0942 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Tallinn, Feb 18, BNS—According to previous agreements, the Estonian border defence on Thursday

[18 February] took over from the Russian navy the Undvanina technical monitoring station in Saaremaa. Last week, the Tahkuna and Kopu monitoring stations in Hiiumaa were handed over to Estonia.

By spring, the Border Defence Department hopes to complete the training of specialists for working with the monitoring equipment. The monitoring stations on Estonian islands and the northern coast that have been taken over from the Russian navy make it possible to follow navigation in the Estonian territorial waters with the help of radars.

Agriculture Ministry To Refuse U.S. Grain Credit

LD1902141593 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1500 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] A conference at the Ministry of Agriculture decided that Estonia will refuse the $25 million credit for grain offered by the United States. The Baltic News Service was told by the Ministry of Agriculture press service that the purchase of grain would affect the domestic grain market too much. Last year's winter grain harvest in Estonia was considerably larger than forecast. The state did not have enough funds to buy the entire harvest.

The grain market was also affected by the wheat and maize brought in as grain aid or purchased with favorable credits. According to the ministry, this year all grain growers will have to conclude sales agreements prior to the sowing period. The state will be dealing in food-grade grain in order to guarantee that the population is provided with rye bread, white bread, and other flour products, without interruption. Producers of fodder-grade grain, however, will have to reach agreements about sales conditions for their harvest with grain consumers.

Laar Meets Paldiski Leaders, Urges Base's Conversion

WS1902130393 Tallinn BNS in English 1830 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Tallinn, Feb 18, BNS—Estonian Premier Mart Laar said that the Russian naval base at Paldiski must be turned into a town attracting investors.

Laar spoke at a meeting with local authorities. The meeting was attended by Minister of International Affairs Lagle Parek and Minister of Defense Hain Rebas, the government press service reports.

Representatives discussed the takeover of materials left by the Russian Army. They agreed that, first and foremost, the question of ownership should be settled—whether the objects will belong to the defence ministry or to the local authorities.

The local authorities said they were especially worried about the ammunition storages left behind by the Russian Army. Parek also expressed an interest in the problems of local citizenship departments.

Interior Minister: Ex-KGB Agents Retain Network

OW2102185493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1624 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The network of former KGB agents has been preserved in Estonia, and KGB archives have not been discovered yet, Estonia's Interior Minister, Lagle Parek, told IF [INTERFAX] on Saturday [20 February]. "Therefore the danger and the possibility of blackmailing even the top leadership of the country will always be in evidence," she stressed. A new generation is to grow up in Estonia to avert this danger.

According to the interior minister, the law deprives the former KGB members of the opportunity to hold prominent government posts or serve in the police force. Nevertheless, said Lagle Parek, they are "potentially dangerous" to the state, and "covert surveillance" over them is necessary. "Such a state, as Estonia, cannot afford to lose interest in the former KGB officers, particularly highranking ones," she stressed.

The interior minister said she hopes that the non-Estonian population "will have enough sense" not to cooperate with Russian secret services. Lagle Parek doesn't think it necessary to set up a special unit in the structure of security police to deal with the non-indigenous population. "The more we divide the issues of non-indigenous and indigenous population, the worse the problem will get," Estonia's interior minister pointed out.

Latvia

Foreign Minister Speaks on Russia, Human Rights

WS2202140593 Riga LETA in English 1049 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Riga, 19 February 1993 (LETA)—Russia has broken the consensus concerning the question of the so-called mass violations of human rights in the Baltic States, which was achieved at the U.N. session in New York at the end of the last year and has raised this question at meeting on human rights in Geneva. This was stated by the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Georg Andreyev, at the press-conference on Thursday [18 February]. This unexpected demarche of Russia caused Mr. Andreyev's unplanned visit to Geneva, where he spoke on Russia's new resolution.

The Latvian minister informed that the Russian delegation presented a new resolution concerning this question which in itself was breach of the previous resolution, in accordance with which this question had been closed. Georg Andreyev pointed out that the head of the Russian delegation stated for the first time that "there are forces in Russia which would like to strive for the solution of the question concerning the Russian minorities in the Baltic Republics by undiplomatic means".

The Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs refused to foretell the results of this discussion which will be held on February 26, though he stated that the Latvian delegation was considering three variants of the outcomes of the discussion. If Russia does not agree to the most probable decision of the meeting—to take the presented resolution into consideration, Latvia is ready to present its own variant of the resolution, which will be discussed simultaneously with the Russian resolution.

Georg Andreyev also stated that his request to see the premises of the building, where at present the Russian Embassy in Geneva is located, had been denied by Russian diplomats. It is known that this building is the Republic of Latvia's property. According to the minister his request resulted in 24 hours in a flat refusal without an explanations from Russian officials. This was regarded by the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs as another unfriendly act of Russia.

Latvia 'De Facto' Colony

WS1902133693 Tallinn BNS in English 0942 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Riga, Feb 18, BNS—Latvia and Estonia are still de facto colonized and Russified countries bearing the heavy burden of the past consequences, like the presence of a major foreign army, economic crisis and abnormal demographic situation, said Foreign Minister Georg Andreyev of Latvia at a press conference today, summarizing his address at the 49th session of the UN Human Rights commission in Geneva Feb 15.

The minister also has compared the human rights situation in Latvia, where all residents have been granted equal rights, and Russia, where non-citizens have to perform tax payments in hard currency and are barred from participating in the process of privatization.

There are 210,000 ethnic Latvians permanently residing in the Russian Federation without any possibilities to receive education, listen to radio broadcasts or publish papers in their mother tongue, Andrejev remarked in his address.

Andrejev's visit to Geneva was principally aimed at elucidation of problems of post World War II immigrants in Latvia, assessed as human rights abuse in the Russia-proposed resolution.

The resolution is due to [be] finalized at the UNO Human Rights Commission's plenary meeting by Feb 26, Andrejev said.

According to him, there are three possible ways for tackling the problem - both Russia and the Baltic States present their statements; the session limits itself to discussion and conclusion is made by its speaker; or else the Baltics' representatives submit their resolution on the situation of displaced persons.

Russian Envoy, Godmanis Plan Chernomyrdin Meeting

OW2102185293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1624 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Friday [19 February] Chairman of the Latvian Council of Ministers Ivars Godmanis received Russian Ambassador to Latvia Aleksandr Rannikh, reported the newspaper Diena. During negotiations they discussed possibilities for improving economic relations between the two countries.

The two parties agreed to organize a meeting between Godmanis and head of the Russian government Viktor Chernomyrdin in the near future.

Rannikh answered questions from Godmanis concerning the fate of Latvian citizens who were oppressed in Russia during the Stalin regime. A special group will be formed to resolve the issue.

Agency Head Calls For Scheduled Troop Withdrawal

OW2002170293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1608 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chief of a Latvian agency which monitors the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Latvian territory, Ilgonis Upmalis, sees the absence of a schedule for the Russian pullout as the main obstacle for the pullout as such.

He says the legal status of the Russian servicemen will remain unclear as long as there is no deadline for their presence.

Owing to the same reason, says Ilgonis Upmalis, the Russian servicemen cannot enjoy a preferential legal standing in Latvia and more conflicts with law will be bound to happen.

Talks With Russian Army Reform Group Noted

LD1802232493 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1800 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] The issue of the withdrawal of the Russian Army contingent from Latvia is unequivocal, representatives of the army reform group from a commission of Russian people's deputies stressed today at a meeting with deputies of the Latvian parliament, Foreign Ministry representatives, and counsellors on defense matters to the prime minister and the minister of state. The withdrawal, however, should proceed in a civilized manner so that it will neither break the fortunes of those people who are being withdrawn nor create inhuman living conditions for the servicemen and families who will remain for the time being. The representatives of the army reform group believe that in comparison with Lithuania and Estonia, the situation in Latvia is the most difficult one. This is evidenced by many complaints by Russian officers.

During the talk the illegality of several Russian constitutional standards was pointed out to the Russian side, since it is not permissible for the army of a foreign state to be active in some other state.

Army Reform Agrees on Need To Withdraw Military

OW1902131893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1204 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] There can be no doubt as to the need to withdraw Russia's military contingent from Latvia, said spokesmen for the Russian parliamentary group "Army Reform".

In Riga on Thursday [18 February] their delegation conferred with Latvian MPs [Members of Parliament], Foreign Ministry officials, and defence advisers to Latvia's prime minister and minister of state. The withdrawal of troops, they said, should be carried out "in a civilized manner", without poisoning life for the people who are to leave Latvia, without creating "inhuman conditions" for the servicemen and their families remaining in Latvia for the time being.

Spokesmen for the Army Reform group believe that, as compared with Lithuania and Estonia, the situation in Latvia is the most complicated. The numerous complaints of Russian army officers testify to this.

The Army Reform group in Russia's parliament is relatively small (164 persons). It was formed only two months ago. Nevertheless its spokesmen hope that, as a result of their present visit, the Russian Parliament and Government will heed their advice.

Members of the delegation also conferred with the command of the North-Western Group of Russian troops and with war veterans, and visited several Russian military units.

Joint Commission Demarcates Estonian Border

WS1902151893 Tallinn BNS in English 1834 GMT 18 Feb 93

[Text] Riga, Feb 18, BNS—Estonian and Latvian representatives completed their plans for a border regime between the two countries during a commission meeting in Riga Wednesday [17 February].

Latvian advisor Vilnis Zvaigzne said over 400 landmarks would be placed along the border between Latvia and Estonia and added that the borderline would be marked by a narrow clearing, but "in a way which is in harmony with the scenery."

Estonia is responsible for the 157-km section from the Pededse river to 8 km north of the town of Valga. From that point to the Gulf of Livonia, the border will be built by Latvia.

"This is a historical tradition originating from 1923-1925," said Estonian Foreign Ministry counsellor Udo Helme, head of the Estonian delegation. "We trust each other and will not check each other's work."

Under the agreement, Latvia will make the metal boundary posts, while Estonia will make tokens for them. Thoroughfares will be lined with illuminated boundary posts and tokens.

Estonia also agreed to arrange a contest March 8 for the design of the boundary post head. All the forest cut down from the 12-metre border area will remain at the disposal of the border builders.

Zvaigzne said if the Latvian government agreed to finance the equipment of Latvia's frontier, cartography experts from the Danish company Sankrot would map and make a detailed description of the border area.

The state-owned Eesti Maaparandusprojekt firm will build the Estonian part of the border. In Latvia, the work has been ordered by the Defense Ministry but the builder has not yet been fixed.

The final version of the project will be submitted for ratification to the Estonian and Latvian governments, he said.

Zvaigzne said the equipment of the border from both sides could be accomplished within the next three years.

New Visa Regime for Non-Citizens Introduced

LD2102093393 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0530 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] A visa regime, according to which permanent residents of Latvia who are not Latvian citizens will have to acquire a return visa when going out of Latvia, comes into force in Latvia beginning today. Its likely price will be from $3 to $5. It is envisaged to make the procedure of (?obtaining a visa) easier for those residents of border regions who are related to or connected in some other way to residents of a neighbor state.

Lithuania

Ministry Declines Russian Request To Bring in Troops

LD1902230293 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2000 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Today, the authorized official of the Lithuanian government for Russian troop withdrawal issues, Col. (Stasys Knasys), received a petition from the commander of the Russian airborne division based in Lithuania asking that a new contingent of 700 soldiers be allowed into Lithuania.

As claimed by the commander, the soldiers are to be used as work force to help speed up the pullout of the division from Lithuania. The Lithuanian Ministry of National Defense declined the request.

Mr. (Stasys Knasys), Lithuania's authorized official for troop withdrawal issues, told Radio Vilnius that no extra contingents of Russian troops will be sent into Lithuania.

Jursenas Says Situation Becoming More Stable

OW2102203893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1624 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Following the parliamentary and, subsequently, presidential elections on February 14, the situation in Lithuania has become more stable, said acting chairman of the Lithuanian Seimas, Ceslovas Jursenas.

Speaking on national radio, Jursenas noted that the Democratic Labor Party which constitutes the majority in the parliament, does not set individual groups and political forces against each other, and is making steps to smooth out political confrontation.

To quote Jursenas, the leading party will continue to take measures to "overcome the economic crisis jointly".

Speaking about the proposal on convening a constitutional conference of representatives of different political forces, made by opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis, Jursenas said that such a body has "every right to exist".

The parliamentary majority needs a critically-minded opposition, he said. As to the tone and discretion of the opposition members, they depend on the latter's cultural standards, he said.

Seimas Chairman on Proposal for Consultative Group

LD2102022593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] A proposal by Vytautas Landsbergis, the leader of the Seimas right-wing opposition, to form a democratically represented consultative structure for political discussions with the president could be acceptable, if the president himself agrees, Ceslovas Jursenas, acting chairman of the Seimas, stated this morning over Lithuanian Radio.

Such a council, which is not provided for by the Lithuanian Constitution, would, of course, not have any compulsory consultative power. It would be only an advisory council to make proposals. However, the opportunity for various political forces to exchange views, explain their reasoning, and make constructive proposals, according to Ceslovas Jursenas, would have a certain usefulness.

Speaking of the part played by the opposition in the Seimas, in the press, on radio and television, the acting chairman of the Seimas stressed that it is essential, regardless of [word indistinct]. The opposition is essential to the governing majority, the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, and these remarks and criticism are essential, but it is another matter how this can be done, whether it is too troublesome and in which form it should take. This is a question of tact or correctness, he said. We are in the majority in the Seimas; we must correspondingly assess those who criticize us. We must be able to select what is positive and constructive from any criticism, said acting Chairman Ceslovas Jursenas.

Replying to a question on the formation of the Constitutional Court, Ceslovas Jursenas recalled that so far only one judge of the Constitutional Court has been confirmed. Now, the president will have to propose three candidates; the Seimas chairman three; and the chairman of the Supreme Court two candidates.

He is convinced that by the middle of March all nine judges of the Constitutional Court will be confirmed in their posts.

Demands on the judges of the Constitutional Court are very strict. They must be [word indistinct], highly qualified lawyers, stressed Ceslovas Jursenas.

Opposition Leader Landsbergis on Russian Threat

OW2202172293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1642 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuanian parliamentary opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis has told journalists that according to his information, the leadership of the United Armed

Forces of the CIS has worked out a concept for strategic planning. He said that the concept lists the western region, including the Baltic states, as one of the most important theaters for possible military activity. According to Landsbergis's information, this question will be discussed in Tashkent at the 26 February meeting of the Commonwealth ministers of defense.

The opposition leader called for the holding of consultations and coordinating activities between Lithuania and other states feeling "Russian pressure." He considers it essential that Lithuania occupy a principal position and advance concrete demands to Russia for compensation for "a half-century of occupation, annexation, destruction of wealth, and human suffering in Lithuania, including for the slave labor of the republic's residents in Soviet camps." In addition, the parliamentary opposition leader emphasized the importance of a more active Lithuanian policy in the West to counterbalance "Russia's political priorities and intimidation." In response to a Baltfax correspondent's question as to whether Landsbergis has any documents to confirm the existence of the threats mentioned, Landsbergis said that he was alluding to press reports.

Landsbergis Says Russian Remarks 'Inconsistent'

OW1902211193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1716 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vytautas Landsbergis, the opposition leader in the Lithuanian Seimas, has said that the command of the Joint CIS Armed Forces has developed a concept of strategic planning in which the eastern region, which includes the Baltic countries, is a possible theater of operations.

Speaking at a briefing on Friday [19 February] Landsbergis said that the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry had to ask its Russian counterpart for an official explanation. The concept, he said, will be discussed at a meeting of defense ministers of CIS member nations to be held in Tashkent on February 26.

Landsbergis also quoted Sergey Zotov, head of the Russian delegation in negotiations with Latvia, as saying that Russian troops would not be pulled out of the Baltic states before 1944 [as received]. This is inconsistent, he reminded the journalists, with an understanding between Lithuania and Russia that the withdrawal will be complete before the end of next August. These are, in his words, "dangerous and unpleasant facts."

The opposition leader called for consultations and coordination of activities with other states that feel "pressed by Russia." He thinks that Lithuania had to take a firm position and demand that Russia compensate it "for five decades of occupation, annexation, destruction of riches, loss of human life, and slave labor of Lithuania's inhabitants in the camps." Besides, Landsbergis wants Lithuania to pursue a more vigorous policy in the West to counter "Russian blackmail." Asked by a BALTFAX reporter if he had any documents confirming the dangers he mentioned, Landsbergis replied that he relied on press reports.

Landsbergis Addresses Seimas on Election Results

WS1902152393 Vilnius ELTA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1756 GMT 18 Feb 93

[From ELTA "NEWS BULLETIN" No. 188]

[Text] 18 February 1993—Yesterday at the extraordinary session of the Seimas the opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis made a statement on the presidential election results.

He said that the elections to the Seimas and presidential election do not mean that Lithuanian citizens approve of the criminal activity and politics performed by the communist parties of the Soviet Union and Soviet Lithuanian from 1940 till 1990. It is a preliminary belief in the future new politics. Vytautas Landsbergis and the Seimas's opposition hope that the President will protect the state, law and that the state's interests, not the party's interests, will become the only object of his concern.

The statement also cherishes hope that the President will not serve his party but will listen to opinion of other political parties of the Seimas. Vytautas Landsbergis said that it should be done with the establishment of a special consultational structure, a political meeting at the President's office. Such a meeting will discuss the state's policy and will try to form a multi-party policy.

Brazauskas To Take Oath, Assume Duties 25 Feb

WS1902124593 Tallinn BNS in English 1902 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] Vilnius, Feb 17, BNS—Lithuanian President-elect Algirdas Brazauskas will take his oath and begin his work Feb. 25, Ceslovas Jursenas, the acting chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, told Lithuanian radio today.

Jursenas said that the parliament's current leaders will remain in their posts until the president starts work. However, because the chairman of the parliament was elected president, the question of new appointments will have to be discussed soon.

In addition, the government is to resign on the day after the president begins work, and, said the acting chairman. [sentence as received]. The new government, said Jursenas, will be formed no earlier than 10 March. The special Seimas session, which will last from 17 February until 1 March, a law on the government will still have to be passed [sentence as received].

Brazauskas Interviewed on Election Victory

AU1902170993 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 16 Feb 93 p 1

[Interview with President Algirdas Brazauskas by Maja Narbutt; place and date not given]

[Text] [Narbutt] Your rival questioned your political qualifications and kept saying that "Algirdas Brazauskas looks to the past."

[Brazauskas] I do not know where he got that idea from. I personally asked Mr. Lozoraitis about it. I did not receive an answer. It must be some kind of secret. Perhaps Mr. Lozoraitis wants to depict me as "a politician of a past age," as a "man of the past." That is quite amusing, especially since he is almost 10 years older than me. Some people suggest that the past, membership of the party "brands" one, "deforms" a person. If that is so, then there are about 200,000 "deformed" people in Lithuania.

In every democratic society, when a politician assumes office, the press and opposition refrain form fierce criticism and attacks and only make assessments later.

[Narbutt] Your opponents maintain that if the election campaign had lasted longer, the election results would have been different.

[Brazauskas] Well, if that is consolation to them.... Nothing about the lives of people and societies changes in a few weeks. The people who voted for me were the same people who voted for me and my party in the fall parliamentary elections.

[Narbutt] You are the president. Your party has a majority in parliament, the prime minister will change shortly, and so might the government. Is that too much power in one set of hands? Does society long for strong authority?

[Brazauskas] I do not see there being such a danger. Lithuania has a constitution that I will adhere to. The Lithuanians do not want strong authority at all, what they want above all is order. I do not believe that one person can introduce "order." People want everything to be clear-cut. They want their views to be heard.

[Narbutt] You received exceptionally strong support from the Polish minority, more so than in the rest of Lithuania.

[Brazauskas] Yes, that was also the case with the parliamentary elections. I do not think that there will be any more conflicts related to the minority question. Promises were also made in the past, but they proved to be empty. I will not allow that to happen as along as I am in power.

Russian, Ukrainian Leaders Congratulate President

OW1902211593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1857 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian President Boris Yeltsin has congratulated Algirdas Brazauskas upon his indisputable victory in the Lithuanian presidential election. In his message he voices the hope that relations between Lithuania and Russia will be developing on the basis of strict observance of the principle of neighborliness, equality and mutual respect.

In his message President Yeltsin wished the people of Lithuania success in building a democratic state, peace, happiness and prosperity.

Brazauskas has also received congratulations from the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, who voiced the hope for mutual cooperation between the two countries.

Brazauskas Resigns From Democratic Labor Party

LD1902150893 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Text] Algirdas Brazauskas told a meeting of the Democratic Labor Party [DLP] council today: As I have been elected president of the Republic of Lithuania by the will of the people in free democratic elections, and in order to comply with Article 83 of the republic's Constitution, I am ceasing my activities in the Democratic Labor Party and resigning from all its structures.

This is not an easy thing for me to do, he said, because I have been collaborating for many years with those present here, have held disputations and discussions, and have experienced moments of joy and sadness. But it is essential to do this, both in order to comply with the Constitution and to ensure that no suspicions or shadows arise in society.

From today, the DLP is for me just like any other party or movement, Algirdas Brazauskas stressed.

He read a statement saying that the cessation of his activity in the DLP and its structures corresponds with his conviction that the head of state cannot represent only one political force but must embrace the political and social interests of all citizens.

Thus, yet another step will be made toward the accord in our society for which we all are striving, Algirdas Brazauskas said.

Until the DLP's third congress, Gediminas Kirkilas, the party's first deputy chairman, will act as party chairman in accordance with Article 34 of the party's statutes.